

Leo Glad

# Faithful to the History Faithful to the Future.

Transition from an Immigrant Congregation  
to an Ethnic Congregation.

Helsinki 2003  
Yliopistopaino

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To My  
Mother

# Abstract

Faithful to the History Faithful to the Future.  
Transition from an Immigrant Congregation to an Ethnic  
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This is a study about the transition process from an immigrant congregation to an ethnic congregation. Usually ethnic churches have forgotten their ethnic roots in their transition process. It seemed like there were two roads to take. One was the "well traveled way to North-Americanization" in which the congregation forgets its past, its history and its ethnic roots when adapting to the new homeland and becoming Canadian. The other one was something new, at least among immigrant congregations in Canada and the USA. Would it be possible to be faithful to the peoples' history and to the future at the same time?

The Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada, started the process in 1984. Participatory Action Research (PAR) method was chosen to enable a research project which would not just study and follow-up but actually influence the process of transition. The PAR method was also chosen to enable a planned and controlled transition. The longitudinal research project furthermore made it possible to study the actual process. Secularization and assimilation theories provided the theoretical framework.

The whole project was done in three phases. Stage one was preliminary including trust building. Stage two was planning and strategy building. Stage three was action, mission and building project. This process included two main surveys in 1994 and 1998. Strategy for the transition was adopted in 1995 based on historical, tradition historic and empirical information. The congregation adopted a direction for the transition by which they wanted to intentionally retain

their ethnic identity and use it as "a positive force to lead them to the future".

Firstly, this study confirms that ca. 80 - 90% retain their childhood religious affiliation, as do Canadians on average. One's childhood home is one of the best ways to predict a person's future religious affiliation. Secondly, religion forms a psychological link that is interwoven at home with ethnicity. Correctly, this congregation saw this possibility and followed the strategy whereby the ethnic culture is utilized by religion.

# Tiivistelmä

Uskollinen historialle

uskollinen tulevaisuudelle.

Siirtyminen siirtolaisseurakunnasta etniseksi seurakunnaksi

Tämä on tutkimus siirtymävaiheen prosessista, jossa siirtolaisseurakunta muuttuu etniseksi seurakunnaksi. Yleensä etniset seurakunnat ovat unohtaneet etniset juurensa siirtymävaiheen prosessissa. Valittavissa näytti olevan kaksi tietä: Toinen oli tavanomainen pohjoisamerikkalaistuminen niin, että siirtolaisseurakunta unohtaa oman taustansa, historiansa ja etniset juurensa sopeutuessaan uuteen kotimaahan ja muuttuessaan kanadalaiseksi seurakunnaksi. Toinen taas oli ainakin Kanadan ja USA:n siirtolaisseurakunnille uutta: voisiko olla mahdollista olla uskollinen sekä historialle että tulevaisuudelle.

Kanadassa, Ontariossa toimiva Thunder Bayn suomalainen evankelis-luterilainen seurakunta aloitti siirtymäprosessinsa vuonna 1984. Menetelmäksi valittiin osallistuva toimintatutkimus (PAR), jotta paitsi tutkimusta ja seurantaa voitaisiin vaikuttaa itse siirtymävaiheen prosessiin. PAR-metodi valittiin myös, jotta siirtymävaihe sujuisi suunnitelmallisesti ja kontrolloidusti. Pitkittäistutkimus teki mahdolliseksi tarkastella myös itse prosessia. Maallistumis- ja assimilaatio-teoriat tarjosivat sopivan viitekehyksen.

Projekti toteutettiin kolmessa vaiheessa: Ensimmäinen vaihe oli alustava; sen olennainen osa oli luottamuksen rakentaminen. Toinen vaihe oli suunnitelman ja strategian laatiminen. Kolmas vaihe oli toiminnan aloittaminen, tehtävän suorittaminen ja rakennusprojekti. - Prosessiin sisältyi kaksi kyselytutkimusta, jotka tehtiin vuosina 1994 ja 1998. Muutosstrategia hyväksyttiin vuonna 1995. Se perustui kerättyyn historialliseen, traditiohistorialliseen ja empiiriseen aineistoon. Seurakunta valitsi muutosvaiheen suunnaksi pyrkimyksen säilyttää etninen identiteetti ja käyttää sitä myönteisenä voimana tiellä tulevaisuuteen.

Tämä tutkimus vahvistaa, että 80 – 90 % säilyttää lapsuuden uskonnollisen sitoutumisen - aivan kuten kanadalaiset keskimäärin. Lapsuudenkoti on parhaita tapoja ennustaa henkilön tulevaa uskonnollista sitoutumista. Toiseksi tutkimus osoittaa, että uskonto muodostaa psykologisen siteen, joka lapsuudenkodissa punoutuu yhteen etnisyyden kanssa. Seurakunta näki aivan oikein tämän mahdollisuuden ja noudatti strategiaa, jonka mukaan etninen kulttuuri palvelee uskontoa.

# Preface

It all started at the basement of the old Independent Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church on 70 Secord St. The Church Council was sitting around long banquet tables. We had been talking about the aging members and declining membership. We thought about the possibility that eventually the church doors would be closed forever. The image was scary but not far taken. The old Norwegian Lutheran Church only a couple of blocks away on the same street, had been for sale for awhile. I cannot remember who it was but somebody looked on the wall and pointed at the pictures of those who had been confirmed: "Where are they?" On the wall were hanging the group pictures of all confirmation classes since 1950. The eyes of about 1200 young boys and girls were looking at us around the table. That was the beginning of the new vision and this project that lasted 14 years for me and is still going on.

First and foremost I want to thank my family, Ritva, Petri and Jenni, for their support all the way. They have lived the life to the fullest with me and during those years in Thunder Bay the Hilldale project was also part of their lives. I could not have made it this far without their help.

This project has been the best thing in my life that I have been involved with. First I would like to thank the faithful and committed members of the congregation who called me to be their pastor. The Church Council who was courageous enough to start visioning something different and untraditional. I like to thank the members of the Mission Committee who spent many early morning, before work, hours at meetings visioning the future while eating Finnish Pancakes at Hoito Restaurant at Bay Street. Mission Committee worked also as my local advisory group.

I was fortunate to have so many friends and colleagues to help me. I am unable to mention all of their names here but I know that you know how much you meant to me. There is one friend however whom I want to mention, Rev. Antti Lepistö, president of American Suomi Conference. So many times he drove four to five hours from Duluth to Thunder Bay to encourage me and the people who were involved with the project.



I got strong support from my Bishops Lee Luetkehoelter and Richard Smith, as well as from the Director for Canadian Mission Rev. Jim Chell and Mr. Gerhard Rohr, who also helped us with the financing of the project. My academic adviser professor Richard W. Nysse, and my first reader and opponent professor, James A. Nestingen, helped me with dissertation at Luther Seminary, St.Paul, Minnesota. Two local advisors, Rev. Katherine Bergbush and Executive Director Michel Maunula helped me to ground my studies in context without counting their time. I also like to express my thanks to the following: Mr. Henry Suutari proofread and Mr. Timo Miettinen helped with the SPSS program in my 1995 thesis; Mrs. Virva Marjanen, Garry Timmons and Jenni Timmons-Glad for proofread this dissertation in hand.

I like to sincerely thank professor Eila Helander who has encouraged me to continue my studies again at the University of Helsinki, and to use Participatory Action Research as a method in this study. Many thanks to professor Tapio Lampinen who has been encouraging me to continue my studies and research all the way since I got my masters degree in 1980. Professors Marja Liisa Swantz and Eva Hamberg have given me valuable feedback on my thesis. Professor Kirsi Tirri and Dr. Kati Niemelä have also given valuable advice to me for the statistical analysis part of this study.

Helsinki, February 26, 2003

Leo Glad

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## *1.1. Presenting the Study*

Church has been an important place for the Finnish immigrants in Canada. It was one of the first things they built together in their new homeland. It is no wonder that now, when many originally ethnic churches have closed their doors forever, that the future has become a great concern for still existing ethnic congregations.

This study took place in Thunder Bay, Canada. The city at the West End of the Great Lakes has been known as the largest settlement of Finnish immigrants in one city outside of Scandinavia. The Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thunder Bay was established in 1950. The congregation has about 2000 baptized and 320 active members and serves the whole settlement of 10,000 to 15,000 mainly Lutheran immigrants and their siblings living in the area. I came to Thunder Bay to serve as the pastor of the congregation for the first time in 1984 for four years and returned back to Finland as planned. I returned back to the same place and position at the end of 1990 and stayed to the end of 1999.

The Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thunder Bay in Canada (later known as Hilldale Lutheran Church) started to raise the question of its future in the early 1980's. The church did not seem to attract new and younger members anymore. The members of the congregation were especially concerned of their own children, those who had been baptized, confirmed, and maybe even married at the church. One can say that this concern was the beginning of the transition process from the first generation immigrant congregation to an ethnic, that is the siblings of first generation immigrants, congregation.

Usually ethnic churches had forgotten their ethnic roots in their transition process (Bibby 1993, 284; Halkola 1972, 175, and Dahlbacka 1994). Such was the case in Thunder Bay where other Lutheran churches that had Danish, Norwegian or Swedish background

had lost their ethnic identity. Some fundamental questions were raised at the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thunder Bay. Was that the only option? Could there be another way to the future? It seemed like there were two roads to take. One was the "well traveled way to North-Americanization" in which the congregation forgets its past, its history and ethnic roots when adapting to the new homeland and becoming Canadian. The other one was something new, at least among immigrant congregations in Canada and the USA. Would it be possible to be faithful to the peoples' history and to the future at the same time? The ethnic identity of the group was still so strong that they started to consider other options. The group was not yet ready to give up its Finnish identity. The congregation started to consider its options. If survival meant forgetting one's ethnic identity, it did not seem very desirable. Would it be possible to survive and retain Finnish ethnicity and even pass it on to the generations to come?

The existing Finnish ethnic congregations in Canada, meaning those whose main language is Finnish, are struggling with their English ministry. As it seems now, some have already passed beyond the point beyond which their survival as independent congregations is very unlikely. Many of the European ethnic congregations made this transition years ago, especially in the United States. In Canada, there are many European ethnic congregations that have not gone through the transition and a growing number of Asian ethnic congregations that will eventually face the time of transition.

This study deals with the problem of how to make the transition from a Finnish Lutheran immigrant congregation to a Canadian Lutheran congregation. The Hilldale Lutheran Church decided to do something to help them in the transition. The congregation carried out a survey in 1994 to get information. Based on this first survey and a study, the congregation adopted the strategy that was developed at the beginning of the process (Glad 1995).

There are several studies that emphasize the importance of childhood affiliation as the most accurate indicator of one's future religious affiliation. The strategy developed and adopted by Hilldale Lutheran Church was based strongly on that assumption. This strategy for a congregation in transition is something new in the Canadian context.



Throughout this project the importance of one's ethnic affiliations and its great importance to one's future church affiliation has been studied. The second survey in 1998 was done to see if the strategy worked as planned and hoped. This project has already been raising interest in other ethnic congregations, which are in a time of transition and planning for the future. The results of this study could be helpful to them.

The strength of this project was the unique opportunity that I had as one of the group of immigrants. We had already built together the level of trust needed for a project like this. The closeness of the researcher to the group under study also meant that it was a challenge to try to keep the proper distance. Participatory Action Research (PAR) method provided the methodological framework and thus enabled the whole Research Project in this form. The Whitehead/Whitehead Method, which was used at the planning and strategy building, enabled a planned and controlled transition process.

## ***1.2. Previous Research***

There are many studies about ethnic groups and ethnic congregations as well as studies about assimilation and retention. Numerous historical and sociological studies have been written about growing and diminishing congregations. However, I am not aware of any empirical studies about congregations that have planned for transition from an immigrant to an ethnic congregation. To my knowledge, no empirical studies exist of the transition process from a Finnish immigrant congregation to a Finnish ethnic congregation. Several studies have been done about the history of Finns in North America, as well as about ethnic transition, identity, assimilation and culture retention of immigrants in Canada, but these do not specifically address congregations as such.

The situation is quite different in Canada from that in the U.S.A. because of the difference in cultural politics. For a long time “the melting pot” has been the theme of cultural politics in the U.S.A. Canada, on the other hand, has adopted an official multiculturalism called the Canadian “mosaic”, a policy which in principle is quite



different from the U.S.A. (Bibby 1990b, 7). This difference might help us to understand why the transition process seems to have been different in the two countries.

Apart from the difference in cultural politics, one important factor why the transition process seems to be different in the United States is that immigration to the U.S.A. started earlier and continued more strongly than in Canada up until the 1950's and 60's. Edward Laine has traced the variables affecting the cultural development of Finns in Canada. He makes the point that because Finnish immigration to the United States occurred much earlier, the immigrants can be characterized as more conservative and church oriented. Immigration to Canada started on a large scale after Finland had experienced movements of socialist reform and thus the early Finnish-Canadian community had a clear socialist bent. According to Laine it was only after the Finnish civil war, and in the 50's, that a more conservative Lutheran fraction of the Finnish-Canadian community arrived and became the largest and most influential part of the community (Laine 1981, 5 - 6).

Laine makes an interesting observation about why Finns pursued their culture so strongly. Firstly, even though they tried to adapt to the Canadian environment, they were refused admission into the cultural establishment, therefore, "the early Finnish-Canadian community (including its Canadian-born members) were left with no alternative but to accept its innate Finnishness as the fundamental quality of its being" (Laine 1981,3).

Secondly, in later years, Finland would increase its interest in Finns who had emigrated abroad which meant that the cultural links with Finland were strengthened but the cultural achievements of Finns in Canada were downgraded (Maunula 1984, 97). As Maunula states, "This stems from the fact that the *suomalaisuus* or cultural experience of Finland becomes the standard by which the *ulkosuomalaisuus* or cultural achievements of Finnish-Canadian and other emigrant communities are to be judged" (Laine 1981, 4).

The Church of Finland adopted the same concept. For a long time the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland (ELCF) had also been supporting, maybe unintentionally, strong ties to the homeland and its church by sending pastors to Canada. The ELCF did this at the request of local congregations, sending pastors for relatively short



terms of two to five years. This frequent exchange has given the Finnish Lutheran congregations “frequently crossed bridges” to the homeland and its culture. Frequent rotation of pastors has strengthened the cultural links, and the “cultural experience of Finland” has largely remained the standard by which cultural achievements in Canada are judged. The official policy of the ELCF, however, has been quite the opposite. Their goal, set by the Church Office for Foreign Affairs, has been that the Finnish immigrants join the local congregations in their new homelands (Kortekangas 1979, 2). Mainly because of the lack of Finnish speaking pastors, Canadian Lutheran churches and local congregations have not always been able to take care of the Finnish ministry without ministerial support from Finland.

Michael J. Maunula's study "The Retention of Ethnic Culture Among Thunder Bay Finns" in 1984 has been helpful to this study especially because the context is the same geographical area. He studied “the degree of original culture retention within an immigrant ethnic group ... to understand the likelihood of that ethnic group successfully surviving in a new society.” His purpose was not to measure how much of the dominant culture had been accepted by the immigrant ethnic group. The amount of original culture retained (in effect, the resistance given to total assimilation) was measured in order to make some comment on the assimilation process among the Finnish ethnic group in the Thunder Bay area (Maunula 1984, 1 - 2). He comes to the conclusion that Finns who reside in rural areas have a high residential propinquity to other Finns, and have a middle to low socio-economic status, retain more of their Finnish culture than those Finns who lack these characteristics (Maunula 1984, 190 - 195).

One of the well-known Canadian sociologists Wsevolod W. Isajiw concludes that the Jewish are high retainers, Ukrainians and Italians medium, and English, the majority of Canadians, and Germans are low retainers (Isajiw 1990, 80 - 81). He studied language, ethnic-group friendships, participation in ethnic-group functions, ethnic media and some internal aspects of ethnic identity. Isajiw's study suggests that this could be also applied to ethnic congregations and could explain in part why both the transition process itself and the timing of the transition varies among different ethnic congregations.

The question has been asked why Finnish congregations seem to be the last ones to make the transition from ethnic-language services

to English? Maybe the difference is in ethnic-identity retention, like Isajiw points out, or maybe it is a question of the size of the ethnic community and the services available, like Sillanpää (1976) has suggested. David Halkola has raised a similar question:

[T]he persistence of this cultural trait considerably beyond the life predicted for it by earlier observers can be explained. To the casual observer this amazing tenacity suggests an example of successful resistance to Americanisation. Indeed, the first Finnish immigrants arrived in the United States over a century ago, and the unrestricted flow of immigrants was reduced sharply after World War I. Why, then, have Finnish worship services continued on so widespread a scale when some other immigrant groups with whom the Finnish people might be compared, such as other Scandinavians or Germans, but have scattered manifestations remaining of similar earlier patterns? Does the Finnish religious tradition itself account for the longevity of such language usage or does the time of Finnish Immigration explain this cultural characteristic? (Halkola 1972, 275).

Halkola also suggests more research on the relationships of sharper linguistic barriers, striving for independence of the homeland, and possible stronger psychological needs to establish an ethnic identity. In this respect, as he suggests, Finns had common problems with such groups as the Irish, Polish, or various Slavic immigrants from south-eastern Europe (Halkola 1972, 287).

One recent historic practical theology study of "Svensk-Finska Evangelisk-Lutherska Församlingen af New York City 1919-1935", by Ingvar Dahlbacka in 1994, describes a certain era of Finnish immigration to the U.S.A. The context is different but some similarities with Thunder Bay do exist. Dahlbacka concentrates on three aspects of the process of Americanization: linguistic, ecclesiastic customs and tradition, and inter-ethnic interaction in choice of names. His study unveils that the acculturation process varied in different areas and also at different times. His study shows that the Great Depression in the early 1930's was an important milestone in making the development of Americanization more rapid. His study further confirms the Canadian experience that this financially difficult time made the acculturation faster. His study also reveals what used to be the model of not just Americanization but also Canadianization to affiliate with the majority culture and forfeiting one's history. This is what is called the "well-traveled way of Americanization" or the "melting pot". As Dahlbacka's study shows, there was also a better



time before the 1930's and an attempt to retain their own culture "nytta och värde även här i USA". It is interesting how the researcher sees the church building process in the Bronx as part of their integration process. He understands integration as successful assimilation where own cultural identity is retained and at the same time people are taking part in the new culture (Dahlbacka 1994).

Another recent empirical study of "Finnish American Ethnicity as Measured by Collective Self Esteem", in 1999, by Chris Susag, supports the importance of ethnic identity for one's self-esteem (Susag 1999). His sample from Minnesota reminded me of the visit of the JärvenPää-singers in Thunder Bay at Hilldale Lutheran Church in 1998. Some of the members of this ethnic choir were also participants in Susag's study. While the choir was introducing themselves at the church, several third and fourth generation siblings of Finnish immigrants stood up and said: "I am 100% Finn." The descendents of Finnish immigrants were well aware of their ethnic roots, pursued their ethnic heritage and were proud of it. Being proud of one's heritage has not always been acceptable. These same people told stories from their childhood: "When we had Finnish speaking visitors, friends or relatives, we were sent out or to the neighbor's house to play. Our parents didn't want us to hear and learn the Finnish language." There was a time when assimilation was the model that Finnish immigrants applied to their lives, not just in USA but also in Canada. Comments referring to one's ethnic background seem like a sign of a new era in the history of North-Americanization. Ethnicity is considered to be one of the future trends (Naisbitt and Aburdene 1990).

The research projects done by Canadian sociologist Reginald W. Bibby have been helpful for this study. He has studied extensively and for a long period of time the Canadian religious milieu. He has further developed Stark's and Bainbridge's theories of secularization to fit the Canadian context. He argues that even though people are not attending church they are not going away, and are faithful to their childhood church affiliation. The first study carried out at Hilldale Lutheran Church in 1994 (Glad 1995) supported Bibby's findings and helped the congregation to focus its mission towards the affiliates. I also want to mention that historian G.A. Rawlyk's study about the Canadian evangelicalism has provided some reference to this study when making the questionnaires and relating the data to the wider Canadian context (Rawlyk 1996).







## 2. IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

### *2.1. Assimilation and Retention*

The term assimilation is used to describe the process by which an outsider, immigrant, or subordinate group becomes indistinguishably integrated into the dominant host society. Retention means the opposite, how much of the original culture is retained in this process (Marshall 1994).

The theory of assimilation contends that a cultural consensus will be obtained through the absorption of minority groups into the majority group. In the American case, this phenomenon has been expressed as “anglo-conformity.” While contemporary assimilation theorists argue that social power and economic relationships account for this process, the original Social Darwinist doctrine of assimilation relies upon the assumption that the dominant group’s culture is socially superior. Much research has demonstrated that assimilative processes do occur in many societies, yet the assumption that minority cultures ultimately disappear has not been empirically validated (Breton et al. 1990, Berry and Sam 1998, 293-295).

Rather than contending that the majority culture is superior, the “melting pot” idea stipulates that all ethnic cultures have desirable elements. The new social amalgamation is said to result from a selective merging of the superior traits of the various ethnic cultures that contribute to it. However, contemporary theorists would argue that amalgamation is a central process in modern, socially pluralistic nation states (Newman 1978, 40-42).

Ethnic culture, like all other cultures, is capable of changing both its meanings and its functions. It is capable of revealing both adaptability and resistance to social change. In other words, ethnic

culture can both promote and resist assimilation and change.<sup>1</sup> Raymond Breton writes about this two-way process:

It is through the process of becoming members and participants in the society that the ethnicity of groups is selectively retained, transformed, reconstructed, or disappears. As a result, the ethnicity of destination, if one exists at all, can be significantly different from the ethnicity of origin. (Breton et al. 1990, 7).

Assimilation, acculturation and retention are some of the most complex areas of research in cross-cultural studies. The term "assimilation" in its traditional meaning is a synonym for acculturation and has been used to describe the process by which an immigrant or group becomes indistinguishably integrated into the dominant culture. The term "acculturation" on the other hand, is commonly understood as assimilation even though it was originally only one of the many possible varieties of acculturation. Different researchers depending on their approach, emphasis and time of research use different terms interchangeably and overlappingly. The process involves more than one culture and there are many variables on group and individual levels. There are several assimilation, acculturation and retention theories. The phenomenon of adaptation can be approached from various points of view. Many studies on adaptation focus on an individual's experience of acculturation. Usually these types of studies are done in the cross-cultural psychology framework. The concept of acculturation is employed to refer to the cultural changes that are results of migration or other forms of intercultural encounters on group levels, while the concepts of psychological acculturation and adaptation refer to the psychological changes on individual levels (Berry 1980, 9-25).

A distinction has to be made between assimilation, as a collective or group level, and psychological acculturation. Assimilation or acculturation on a group level is defined as a change in the culture of the group. Psychological acculturation is a change in the psychology of the individual. This distinction between the cultural variables that influence the group and individual and the psychological outcomes of these influences is important in order to understand these

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<sup>1</sup> This promotion and resistance of assimilation and change can be seen in our congregation when on one hand the congregation wants to follow strictly the Finnish tradition and on the other hand wants to go in some distance from the church in Finland, for example, by making its decisions independently in its own environment in Canada.



two distinct processes and these two sets of variables. This distinction is important also because not all individuals participate to the same extent in the general acculturation being experienced by their group. While the general changes may be intensive in the group, individual experiences may vary a great deal (Berry and Sam 1998, 298).

In plural societies, all ethnic and cultural groups and individual members have to deal with the issue of how to assimilate and retain culture. The two basic issues for individuals are cultural maintenance (to what degree ethnic culture is retained) and contact and participation (to which extent the individuals are involved in other ethnic and cultural groups). When these two central issues are considered simultaneously by an individual a conceptual framework is developed (Figure 2.1. – 1) which generates four acculturation strategies.

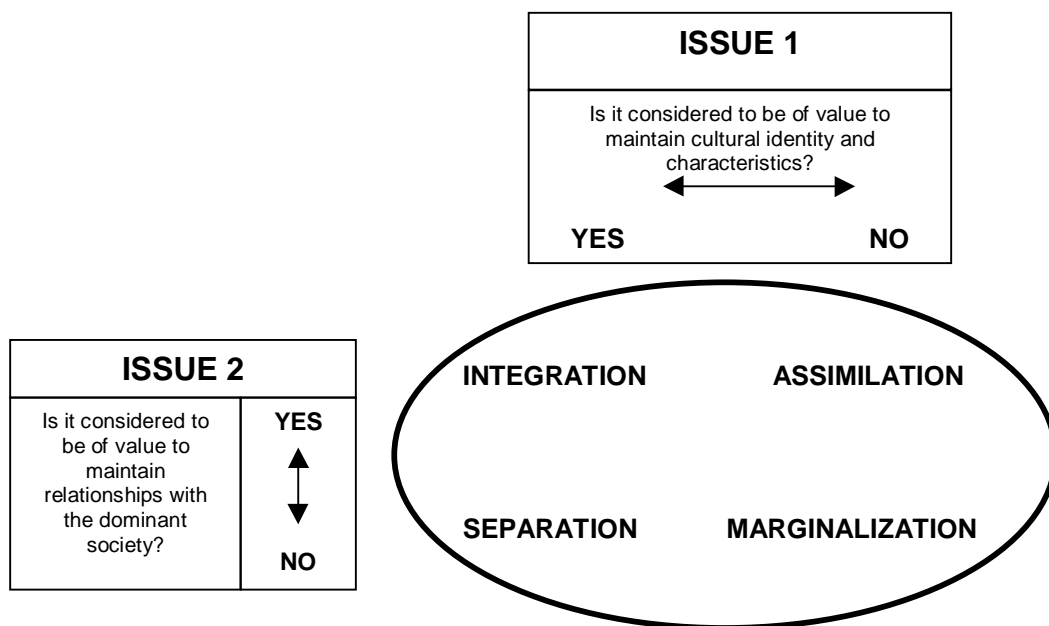


Figure 2.1. - 1. Psychological Acculturation Strategies (Berry and Sam 1998)

When an immigrant chooses not to maintain ethnic identity and interacts daily with other culture(s), then the Assimilation strategy is

defined. In contrast when people hold to their own ethnicity but do not wish to interact with others, the Separation alternative is employed. When an individual wants to both retain one's own ethnic culture and interact with the surrounding environment, Integration is the option. Marginalization happens when one does not maintain cultural identity nor relationship with the dominant society. In recent studies a distinction has been drawn between psychological and sociocultural adaptation referring to the internal and external outcomes of individual adaptation processes (Berry and Sam 1998, 296,297). A person's psychological acculturation depends on specific group level factors as shown in Figure 2.1. – 2.

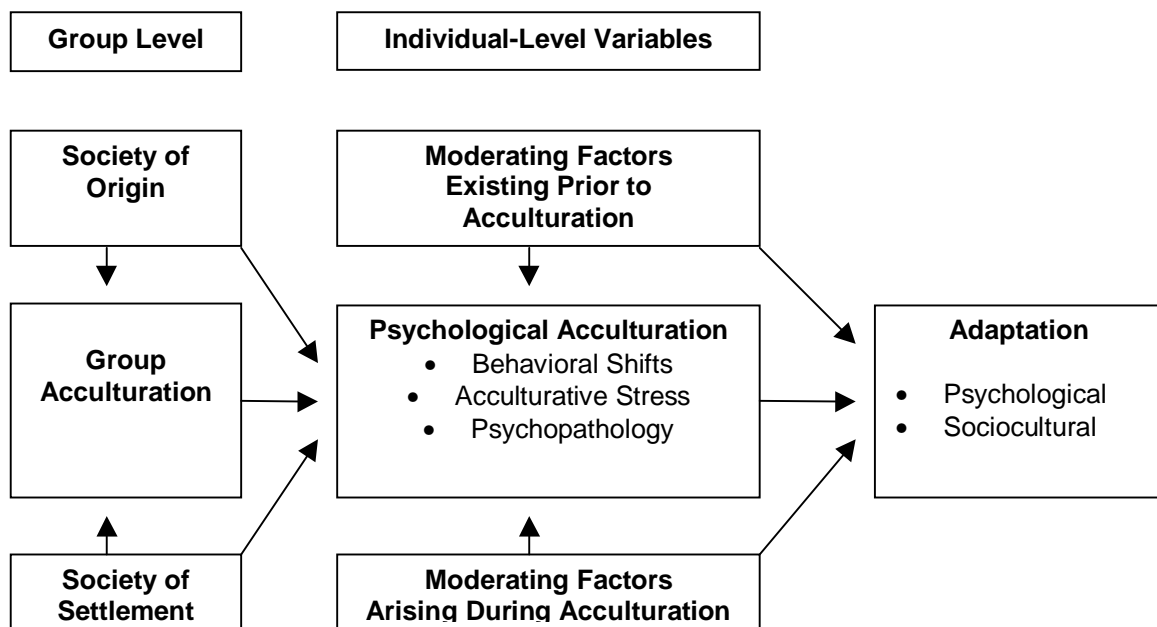


Figure 2.1. - 2. A framework for Acculturation Research (Berry and Sam 1998)

When studying these theories to provide a framework for this study, emphasis was given to a Canadian context and group process instead of an individual emphasis. Even though different theories seem to grasp different dimensions of assimilation processes, it makes sense to use one that is made for Canada and thus Gordon's theory was chosen for this study. Milton Gordon has developed at least two theoretical concepts. The earlier one "Assimilation in American Life"

(1964) is based on an American context, and its emphasis is on an individual's transition process and its subprocesses. This concept corresponds closely to the Integration strategy in Figure 2.1. – 1. When structural assimilation is present (a high degree of contact and participation) combined with a low degree of cultural assimilation (a high degree of cultural maintenance), then the outcome is similar to Integration.

Gordon's theory from 1978 in "Human Nature, Class and Ethnicity" is group oriented and classifies three ideological models of ethno-racial group relations that define the range of an inequality continuum for the potential of ethnic/group cultural existence. These models are: 1) Assimilationist Model, 2) Liberal Pluralism, and 3) Corporate Pluralism. For the purpose of the Hilldale Participatory Action Research (PAR) process this continuum well defines the options for the direction of the transition process.

Many acculturation theories implement individual assimilation processes. The main concern and focus of this study is not how individuals acculturate but what the direction of the transition chosen by the group is in its process. I am using this terminology in its sociological context where assimilation is at one end of the continuum and retention on the other. The framework of this study is sociological and the theory and concept of psychological acculturation (Berry and Sam 1998) is only supportive.

Milton Gordon attributes the principle variable in the relations of minority groups and their members to the majority group(s) and the host culture(s) on the one side, and to the minority group members' sense and coherence of their ethnic culture on the other. This principle variable is the ideology about interethnic relations in a nation. Gordon classified three ideological models of ethno-racial group relations that together seem to define the range of an inequality-equality continuum for the potential of ethnic/group cultural existence (Figure 2.1. - 3). The first is the Assimilationist Model, wherein those of a minority ethnicity are encouraged or coerced to abandon their ethnic culture in favor of the dominant or "official" culture.



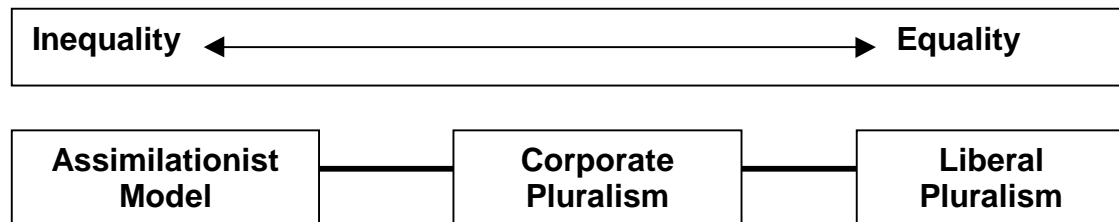


Figure 2.1. - 3. Ideological Models of Ethno-Racial Group Relations on the Range of Inequality-Equality Continuum.

The second, at the opposite end of the continuum is Liberal Pluralism. This emphasizes the absence and even prohibition of any legal, official, or unofficial government recognition of racial, religious, linguistic-cultural, or national-origin characteristics as having any special significance in the formation of government programs or practices. Gordon's third ideological model, in the mid-point of the continuum, is Corporate Pluralism wherein ethnic groups are formally recognized as legally constituted entities with official standing.

Within both of the pluralist models emphasis is on equality of condition and opportunity, not on equality of outcome. Within Liberal Pluralism, opportunity is extended to all minority groups without distinction. Within the Corporate Pluralism model, there can be restrictions which result in inequality. Within Canada, Corporate Pluralism describes the linguistic relationship for Quebec whereas Liberal Pluralism better characterizes the situation in other parts of Canada (Gordon 1978). Because of the Liberal Pluralism practiced in Ontario, Hilldale Lutheran Church has been able to promote its own ethnic traditions. Within this model, this congregation also has the opportunity to choose its own future.

At this point, it is appropriate to say a few words about the socio-political environment in which the Hilldale project is taking place. The Canadian state presents two desirable outcomes to its ethnic groups, operationalized through a variety of laws, government departments, and agencies, notably of multiculturalism. Morton Weinfeld writes: "The first outcome is the possible survival of ethnic groups and specifically their cultures, within a 'multicultural' society (e.g., section 27 of the Charter, various funding programs). The second

outcome is the promise of full and equal participation in Canadian society, without discrimination (e.g., section 15 of the Charter, anti-racist programs and efforts)" (Weinfeld, 1994:238-239). There are several specific factors that affect the process of assimilation and retention on the group level (Berry and Sam 1998):

Variable	Specific feature
Society of origin	Ethnographic characteristics (e.g., language, religion, values) Political situation (e.g., conflict, civil war, repression) Economic condition (e.g., poverty, disparity, famine) Demographic factors (e.g., crowding, population explosion)
Society of settlement	Immigration history (longstanding vs. recent) Immigration policy (intentional vs. accidental) Attitudes towards immigration (favorable-unfavorable) Attitudes towards specific groups (favorable-unfavorable) Social support (availability, usefulness)
Group assimilation	Changes in assimilating group: Physical (e.g., rural to urban) Biological (e.g., nutrition, disease) Economic (e.g., loss of status) Social (e.g., isolation) Cultural (e.g., dress, food, language)

Figure 2.1. - 4. Group-Level Assimilation Variables.

The above table (2.1. - 4) of factors gives a rough idea of the complexity of cross-cultural studies. The number of cultures involved, and individual-level variables, multiply these factors. Research that does not attend both levels of assimilation (individual and group) and ignores key factors of different variables cannot hope to understand the adaptation process. However, it is important to note that there is no single research project that incorporates and verifies all aspects of assimilation framework (Figure 2.1. -1, 2.1. - 2 and 2.1. - 3).

One of the theses of this study is that ethnicity and religion serve very much the same needs and should not be separated but used to support one another. Religion and ethnicity connect us to something bigger than us, to something that has been before and will be after us, a sense of belonging. The secularization theory innovation argument includes the continuity factor. Many studies show that this continuity factor includes both ethnicity and religion (Nock 1933, 9-10; and Stark 1997, 51-55; and Bibby 1993, 153,165).

Finke and Stark argue that the American Catholicism succeeded during the immigration years as the Catholic Church was able to inspire them to "new levels of commitment and participation" because of their pluralistic society and competition with Protestant churches (Finke and Stark 1992,109). They add that the parishes' function was as an ethnic and religious community, and thus these communities were retaining ethnic identity. "Catholicism and ethnicity were intertwined in the local parish to provide the immigrants and their children a community unto themselves" (Finke and Stark 1992, 133-134).

Eva M. Hamberg makes a good point that, like cultural continuity, adaptation to the new religious situation in the immigration country depends on the "situation in the immigration country as compared to that in the country of origin, such an adaptation may involve either an increase or decline in individual levels of religiosity" (Hamberg 1999, 78). (Compare to Figure 2.1. - 4 of group level cultural variables). She lists some factors that impact immigrants' religious participation: "the conditions of life in the country of origin, the reasons for the decision to emigrate, various circumstances in connection with the emigration process (e.g., individual migration versus group migration), and the conditions of life in the new country" (Hamberg 1999, 83).





One can see the importance of the situation in the immigration country among Jewish immigrants. Stephen Steinberg states clearly that emancipated Jews discovered Judaism not to be just a religion (Steinberg 1965, 117-129). Emancipation caused many Jews in the States to become socially marginal - no longer accepted as Jew and not truly American. Stark claims that "People will attempt to escape or resolve a marginal position." (Stark, 1997: 52.) Some tried to solve their marginal position by assimilation and some by becoming a new kind of Jew. The Pittsburgh Platform attempted to strip ethnicity from theology (Steinberg 1965, 125). It is no wonder that in recent times children of Jews have been joining new religious movements. However, Stark makes the important proposition: "People are more willing to adopt a new religion to the extent that it retains cultural continuity with conventional religion(s) with which they already are familiar." Referring to Nock (1933, 9-10) he continues: "The principle of cultural continuity captures the human tendency to maximize - to get the most for the least cost" (Stark, 1997, 55). This tendency needs to be taken seriously since it can be seen as an opportunity for an immigrant congregation.

## ***2.2. Ethnic Identity***

There are many areas of life in which ethnicity can be an active force. On a fundamental level, it can shape identities by determining who people are in their own eyes and in the eyes of others. Social identities provide social roots and a sense of belonging, of not being lost in the multitude.<sup>2</sup> As Isaacs writes about it:

An individual belongs to his basic group in the deepest and most literal sense that he is not alone, which is what all but a very few human beings most fear to be. He is not only not alone, but here, as long as he chooses to remain in and of it, he cannot be denied or rejected. It is an identity that no one can take away from him (Isaacs 1975, 35).

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<sup>2</sup> For a fuller discussion of the point made here, see Breton, [Ethnic Identity](#), 5.

On the other hand, the identity of individuals is not based solely on their ethnic origin. People may retain some sense of their ethnic identity, but may be less interested in the cultural and organizational expressions of their identity. Clearly, the impact of ethnicity is a variable in shaping identities and social organizations. Ethnicity can be critical, totally insignificant, or have a whole range of effects in between.<sup>3</sup> As Yancey has said, it does not make sense to think of ethnicity as merely

... a constant ascriber trait that is inherited from the past. The assumption of a common heritage as the essential aspect of ethnicity is erroneous. Ethnicity may have relatively little to do with Europe, Asia or Africa, but much more to do with the exigencies of survival and the structure of opportunity in this country (Yancey et al. 1976, 400).

As Breton states: "Ethnicity is also a reflection of the present and the anticipated future" (Breton 1990, 6). In this light our plans for the future, building a new church, etc., reflect the identity of our members and vice versa.

Wsevoid W. Isajiw makes the following point of the different aspects of retention; that there is a variation of retention by different components, from generation to generation and the variation of the subjective meaning for one's ethnic identity:

[T]he retention of ethnic identity from one generation to another does not necessarily mean retention of both its aspects, or all the components of each aspect in the same degree. Some components may be retained more than others; some may not be retained at all. A member of the third generation may subjectively identify with his ethnic group without having knowledge of the ethnic language or without practicing ethnic traditions or participating in ethnic organizations. Or, inversely, he or she may practice some ethnic traditions without having strong feelings of attachment to the group. Furthermore, the same components of external identity may acquire different subjective meaning for different generations, ethnic groups, or other subgroups that the ethnic identity retained by the third

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<sup>3</sup> For a fuller discussion of the point made here, see Breton, Ethnic Identity, 6.



generation is of the same type or form of identity as that retained by the first or the second generation (Isajiw 1990, 37).

As said before in section 1.2., “Previous Research,” Isajiw reaches the conclusion that the Jews are high retainers, Ukrainians and Italians, medium retainers, and English (majority Canadians) and Germans are low retainers.<sup>4</sup> Isajiw’s conclusion could also be applied to ethnic congregations, like the Hilldale Lutheran Church, and could explain in part why the transition process itself and the timing of the transition varies among different ethnic congregations.

In the previous section, we summarized Gordon’s ideological models of ethnic - racial group relations, which helped us to understand the official policies in Canada and the relationship between different ethnic groups. In an earlier publication Gordon proposed four distinct types of assimilation (Gordon 1964, *passim*.) which help us to understand the external factors of ethnic-identity retention. These variables are: cultural assimilation (adoption of dominant group culture, values, and life-style); structural assimilation (entrance into dominant group institutions, clubs, and cliques); amalgamation (defined and measured by intermarriage rates); and identificational assimilation (minority group members think of themselves as American, Canadian, Mexican, etc.). In addition to these four types of assimilation, William Newman argues that assimilation may be measured by the absence of three phenomena: prejudice, discrimination, and power or value conflicts between groups (Newman 1987, 43).

Similarly, according to Isajiw, ethnicity can be divided into external and internal aspects of ethnic identity. External aspects refer to observable behavior, both cultural and social, such as: (1) speaking an ethnic language, practicing ethnic traditions, etc.; (2) participation in ethnic personal networks, such as family and friendship; (3) participation in ethnic institutional organizations; such as churches, schools, enterprises, media; (4) participation in ethnic voluntary associations; such as clubs, ‘societies,’ youth organizations; and (5)

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 49-87. Note: The question has been asked, why Finnish congregations seem to be the last ones to make the transition from ethnic-language services to English. The difference could be in ethnic-identity retention, as noted by Isajiw (1990). He points out that perhaps it is a question of the size of the ethnic-community and the services available like Leonard Sillanpää points in, “The Political Behavior of Canadian of Finnish Descent in the District of Sudbury” (A Licentiate thesis, University of Helsinki, 1976).



participation in functions sponsored by ethnic organizations; such as picnics, concerts, public lectures, rallies, dances. The internal, subjective aspect of ethnic identity refers to images, ideas, attitudes, and feelings. These are interconnected with the external, or objective behavior. Both external and internal can vary independently; one may retain a higher degree of internal aspects than of external aspects, and vice versa (Isajiw 1990).

Internal identity has at least three aspects: (1) cognitive, (2) moral, and (3) affective. First, the cognitive dimension of identity includes self-images and images of one's group. It also includes knowledge of one's group heritage, recognizing its historical past and values as a part of the heritage. The moral dimension involves group obligations. It could mean the obligation of teaching the ethnic language to one's children, marrying within the group, or helping members of the group with finding a job. Feelings of obligation account for the commitment a person has to his/her group and for the group solidarity. The affective, or cathectic, dimension of identity refers to feelings of attachment to the group (Isajiw 1990, 36,37).

Edward N. Herberg quotes Isajiw's theory of the ethnic identity and helps us to understand how ethnicity and religion serve some of the same human needs to place us on a time continuum: "Link up with the remote ... past ... the seasons of the year, to the events in the life cycle." Isajiw's theory can be taken even further, according to Herberg:

[T]he link of values and of identity with the eternal that are part of ethnic-group culture emphasize the human aspects of the whole social life, complementing the material and partializing aspects of the post-industrial urban culture of technological Canada. Indeed, were not ethnicity and ethnic identity still prominent in Canada, something very much like it would have to be invented; humans cannot live by technology alone! (Herberg 1989, 24).

Herberg carries this even further to speculate on the comparative situations in the United States and Canada. The United States has possessed fewer vital ethnic cultures than Canada - at least since the Great Depression, and especially today. This is, perhaps, the reason for the apparently stronger emergence in the United States of the born-again-Christian phenomenon. What may have been born



again instead was a sense of “time-dimensioned identity,” in the relative absence of ethnic identity. In Canada, where ethnic culture and identity remained “healthy”, the “rediscovery” of ethnic identity by individuals, ethno-racial-religious groups, and by governments, legitimized the de facto maintenance of ethnicity in Canada. “Ethnicity in Canada was alive, vital, and needed, but it fulfilled a function different from that of earlier times.” (Herberg 1989, 24,25). According to the studies by Herberg, ethnicity and religion serve some of the same human needs. Because Hilldale Lutheran Church is an ethnic congregation, this correlation needs to be taken seriously.

It is quite obvious that the retention of ethnic language declines from generation to generation, but specific patterns of shift differ significantly for every ethnic group. On the whole, the ethnic language as mother tongue is retained in large proportion in the second generation of some groups, but not in the third generation. After analyzing several studies, Isajiw comes to the conclusion that because more respondents in the third generation know their ethnic language as a second language than as their mother tongue, it cannot be used (although it is often used as such) by itself, as a good indicator of ethnic identity loss (Isajiw 1990). This observation that retention of an ethnic language by itself does not necessarily mean the loss of ethnic identity confirms our own experience through the work among the siblings of the Finnish immigrants.

It has often been argued that the persistence of ethnicity in North American society is most evident in the sphere of interpersonal relations. Empirical evidence has been produced in the past indicating that closer or more intimate friends are more likely to be chosen from the respective ethnic community rather than randomly from the society at large. This pattern of association has been demonstrated with second, third, or even fourth generation immigrants. It is important to notice that friendship patterns vary substantially among different ethnic groups (Isajiw 1990, 58-60). This turned out to be true also at the Hilldale Lutheran Church. The first congregational study (Glad 1995) showed that the first generation members had more of their closest friends in the congregation than the second and third generation.

Ethnic-group persistence is sometimes considered to be dependent on the persistence of ethnic organizations and institutions.



According to a study in the metropolitan Toronto area, there is an overall decrease in participation in ethnic-group functions, and an increase in participation in general non-group functions from one generation to another. But for some ethnic groups the rate of persistence is rather high. Among most ethnic groups in the second generation there is a rapid decline in the percentage of those who attend ethnic-group functions. By the third generation, however, three types of groups emerge: low, medium, and relatively high participants. Germans fall into the low category, but Jews, Ukrainians and Italians are in the highest category. Among some ethnic groups there is even a slight, gradual increase in the participation of ethnic facilities; whereas for other groups there is a steady decrease. If Hansen's<sup>5</sup> hypothesis is true, that the second generation removes itself or rebels against their ethnic group, and the third returns to it, then the third generation is more incorporated than the second generation. Most of the external, behavioral aspects of ethnic identity follow this same pattern (Isajiw 1990, 60-63).

### 2.3. *Secularization*

Secularization is the sign of times, and immigrant communities are no exception. The survival of any congregation over time depends on how well the faith and values are passed on from one generation to the next. This generation gap is a common challenge for all mainline congregations in Canada. Transition from an immigrant congregation to an ethnic congregation naturally includes this gap between first, second and third generation immigrants. This challenge to ethnic congregations has to be taken seriously. It is safe to say that there is no transmission of culture, religion or values without crisis. Cultural discontinuity is said to be a sign of highly modern societies. (Gauchet 1985 in Hervieu-Leger 1998). If individuals produce their own personal truth, how can there be a collective continuity that is fundamental to institutions and societies? This transmission of religion

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<sup>5</sup> Much of the literature on the retention of ethnic identity has been related to the Hansen hypothesis. See Marcus Lee Hansen:

"The Third Generation in America," *Commentary* 14: 496. (n.d.).

American immigrants and Their Generations: Studies and Commentaries on the Hansen Thesis After Fifty Years. Eds. Peter Kivistö and Dag Blanck. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, c1990.

The Problem of the Third Generation Immigrant. Rock Island, Ill: Swenson Swedish Immigrant Research Center, Augustana College Library. 1987.



is the ongoing foundation of religious institutions. It is no wonder that this transmission of culture and religion is a key to immigrant congregations that are in transition.

Social scientists have studied the impact of social change on religion in the past and in the present. Secularization theories are an attempt to understand what has been happening and what is happening right now. There are many theories and variations of them but for the purpose of this study, I consider five of the most common ones in the North American setting. For the purpose of this discussion, the varied interpretations of what is happening to religion in advanced societies can be subsumed under four main categories: secularization, oscillation, stabilization and innovation. The categories are not perfectly distinct and most theories include a combination of arguments. For the purpose of this study I will define one combination theory, by R. Bibby, the fragmentation argument.

Traditional models of secularization predict that there is a steady constant decline in membership, but they undermined the religious experience of individuals. Some suggested that existing dominant institutions and expressions will be replaced by new ones. Religion is still with us. Unfortunately, current experts have not proven to be correct either. Secularization arguments point out that science and reason will answer to life's mysteries, and so religion has decreasing importance in society. (Auguste Comte, 1966; James Frazer, 1922; Sigmund Freud, 1957; Karl Marx, 1970; Richard Niebuhr, 1957; Ernst Troeltsch, 1931; Brian Wilson, 1969; Peter Berger, 1969; Thomas Luckman, 1967).

According to the oscillation argument, societies swing between a moving away from religion and moving towards it. Therefore, secularization will likely be terminated by religious revivals. Some of the oscillation advocates argue that new religions will consequently arise in response to the core questions of existence. (Pitirim Sorokin, 1957; Kingsley Davis, 1949; Daniel Bell, 1977; Jeremy Rifkin, 1980)

In contrast to those who see religion losing influence or vacillating, other observers maintain that religion's place has remained fairly constant. Talcott Parson makes a point that Christianity, rather than being in state of decline, has been both institutionalized and privatized. Individuals are still taking religion seriously, but are



keeping their commitment to themselves (Talcott Parsons 1963). Another prominent proponent of the stabilization argument, Andrew Greeley, goes even further by saying that secularization is a myth, religion continues to flourish, despite talk of its decline (Andrew M. Greeley 1972).

Still other researchers of religion maintain that the decline of existing forms of religion will automatically trigger the appearance of new ones. There is a constant demand for religion; only the suppliers are changing. Even though Durkheim is better known for his secularization thesis, he has a twist in his thinking. Scientific thought will eventually replace religious thought but "is fragmentary and incomplete; it advances but slowly, and is never finished; but life cannot wait" (Durkheim, 1976, 429-431). Rodney Stark and William Bainbridge (1985) have maintained that religion has guaranteed an indispensable role in humanity's quest for meaning. According to them, religion carries explanations to supernatural assumptions and is irreplaceable. They make extensive use of market analogy. Old and new religious groups struggle to gain, retain and enlarge market shares. Revival and innovation are central features of the religion marketplace. Secularization stimulates religion rather than extinguishes it.

I want to discuss some observations of these theories and consider which might be the most helpful for the Hilldale project. First, the secularization argument is underestimating the resilience of existing church religions. Religious groups do not readily die. Religion on personal and organizational levels is far from extinct. Second, contrary to the oscillation argument, it does not look like there is a massive switch taking place in the religious habits in Canada. Third, the innovation argument, it seems to be true that identification with religious traditions remains high. Parson emphasizes the importance of family, which will ensure that the overwhelming majority will accept the religious affiliation of their parents - "unless the whole society is drastically disorganized" - has proven sound (Parson 1963, 294). However, argues R. Bibby, "it's difficult to find support ... that individuals are privately as devout as their predecessors." (Bibby 1993, 79) The levels of commitment have been dropping and if people are "just as religious" as they were in the past, then they neither know it nor show it. Forth, while Durkheim, Stark and Bainbridge, saw new gods that would replace the old in Canada, the old religions that have dominated the stage remain dominant. In the Canadian setting, people





are less eager to change their religious affiliation. Further, attendance numbers are down but affiliation numbers remain high.

Canadian sociologist, Reginald Bibby, suggests a possible synthesis, fragmentation (1990a). His theory can be called the Canadian variation of the theme, decline and replacement. For many reasons, the Canadian religious market is different from the United States. Their religious market has much more variety, and is much more volatile in a sense that people are switching more easily from one church to another. Canada has more Roman Catholic (c.a. 20%, U.S. and 40%, Canada), but Canada has less Baptist (25%, U.S. and 3%, Canada). Further, for historical reasons, Canada has a stronger psychological link with Europe and its established churches. Whereas the United States is more of an open market Canada is still more closed. Canada continues its own variation of state related churches.

Bibby argues (1993)<sup>6</sup> that: First and most importantly, Canadians have religious memory, which gives traditional faiths an emotional and psychological lock. This affiliation can be as high as 80%, measured as intergenerational affiliation of all Canadians, or even higher among those who are irregular attendees. This strong affiliation is the reason why people are unlikely to switch from one denomination to another. Even though they are not attending, they are not leaving the church. Religion is not losing ground. People look for spirituality, mystery, and they have strong religious memory. His main argument against other secularization theories is that they do not tell the whole story. Secondly, Canadians are not switching or giving up because of social pressure. Their family and friends have a psychological lock on them. When people give up their formal membership and do not attend, they continue as affiliates. Bibby's theory is based on a continuity theory but differs from it just because it is applied to a Canadian setting. Thirdly, he is saying that established groups are not giving up easily. They are fighting against new cults, and are also fighting to keep their own territory. Dominant religious groups in Canada have diversified and enlarged their menus and so people have less reason to switch. Bibby's theory was chosen to be the guiding theoretical framework of this study.

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<sup>6</sup> His argument in more detail can be found in his book *Unknown Gods: The Ongoing Story of Religion in Canada*. Toronto: Stoddart Publishing Co. Limited, 1993.





### 3. RESEARCH PROBLEMS

#### *3.1. Problem Addressed by the Project and the Importance of the Problem*

This project deals with the problem initiated by the congregation. How to make the transition from a Finnish Lutheran immigrant congregation to a Canadian Lutheran congregation? Many of the European ethnic congregations made this transition years ago, especially in the United States. In Canada, there are many European ethnic congregations that have not gone through the transition and a growing number of Asian ethnic congregations that will eventually face the time of transition. The existing Finnish ethnic congregations, meaning those whose main language is Finnish, are struggling with their English ministry. As it seems now, some have already passed the point beyond which their survival as independent congregations is very unlikely.

The congregation under study came to the conclusion during the 1990's that something must be done if it were to survive beyond a decade or two. With fewer people, it was likely that during the coming years it would be difficult to maintain the church with a smaller congregation. The present situation in Canada among the Finnish Lutheran congregations does not support the assumption that the general history of North-Americanization will repeat itself. For some reason, unknown to me, Finnish congregations do not seem to follow the ordinary and well-traveled path of North-Americanization or Canadianization. Times have changed and total assimilation into the majority culture does not seem as lucrative or desirable as before. While some of the Finnish Lutheran congregations still have strong Finnish ministries, they are all struggling with their English ministry.

Since change is inevitable, the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thunder Bay wanted to plan for it and be prepared. The congregation wanted to face the challenge to change while it still had some options. The main concern was how the congregation could

make a successful transition that would be faithful to its history and to the future. This meant being faithful to its Finnish roots and taking the challenge of being a Canadian Lutheran congregation seriously.

From the very beginning, it was quite clear that the congregation needed to create a movement that would transform them both personally and socially. The fundamental character of this process was the creation of movement for personal and social transformation. The congregation was unhappy with the current situation, and what the future seemed to offer. The congregation was motivated to change because they were aware that it was their best option. The intention of the congregation made the use of Participatory Action Research (PAR) possible (Swantz 1987, 37).

### ***3.2. Major Concerns and Theoretical / Methodological Expectations of the Study***

The transition process through which the congregation in question is going can lead towards a Canadian congregation that will eventually and intentionally forget its ethnic roots in the process of adaptation and assimilation or it can lead towards a Canadian congregation, which will intentionally retain its ethnicity. Even though this study cannot answer all the related questions, I want to list some of them to assist the reader's understanding of the scope of this study. This fundamental question of the direction of the transition is the major concern of this study to which all the other questions relate.

Questions regarding the hospitality and tolerance that are crucial for an ethnic congregation in transition include: Is the congregation ready to emphasize the importance of English ministry as a means of survival as well as a necessity to reach out to those who have connections to the congregation but speak only English? As a Finnish congregation, will it be hospitable and tolerant enough to accommodate new members from different ethnic and socio-economic groups? Is the congregation able to go through this change before it is too small to go through the transition successfully?



The mission and transition process does challenge the congregational leadership and raises some important questions: Does the leadership have the skills, power and trust required to lead the congregation through this major transition? How can the leadership be provided to create a vision for the mission and how can a congregation be lead through transition?

The congregation in transition also has to consider carefully what has been its identity, what it is going to be and/or what it wants it to be? How can it take care of the existing Finnish speaking part of the congregation so that they don't feel alienated? How can it become a congregation that wants to be faithful to its tradition (Finnish culture) and also to its future (Canadian culture)? How can a congregation that wants to preserve its strong ethnic identity change to a more inclusive identity without absorbing the culture of another group or being absorbed by the culture of an other group? What is its identity now and what is it expected to be in the near future when the change starts to happen? Can one congregation be like Canada, a multicultural ethnic mosaic?

In this process of assimilation the congregation is trying to incorporate a common cultural life and at the same time retain the original culture. What segments of our culture should we maintain and what segments of the surrounding culture should be accepted?

It is quite clear that these questions about assimilation and retention are quite personal and in this case quite congregational. Whereas sociological and theological studies can help us to understand the phenomenon, they will be unable to provide direct answers to specific congregational concerns. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.1. PAR Method.

Bibby's theory of secularization is the guiding theoretical framework of this study. His theory emphasizes the childhood affiliation, which became one of the guiding principals of the Hilldale project. However, the main research question of the direction of the transition process on the assimilation - retention continuum - has not been studied before. Does ethnicity create similar psychological locks as childhood affiliation? This would be important information for many immigrant congregations in Canada planning for the future. New ethnic missions and their strategy building could use this information



also. First, this study is unique in that it implements methods, which enabled a planned and controlled transition process. Secondly, this is a longitudinal study. The developed strategy was applied and the process was evaluated with the second study. This strategy made it possible not just to measure what the situation was at the beginning of the process and after, but to plan and control the direction of the process. Thirdly, this was a unique opportunity because trust, which takes years to build, was already built before the actual project started. Furthermore the timing was right. This immigrant congregation had come to a point in its lifecycle when it was ready for transition.

The expectations of the first phase of the project was that by applying the Whiteheads' method of theological reflection and the methods and principles of Participatory Action Research to the setting in Thunder Bay at the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church, helpful planning strategies would result for the transition from a basically Finnish Lutheran congregation to a Canadian Lutheran congregation.

For the second phase of the study, Participatory Action Research method was used to follow up with the process and continue the praxis, action-reflection. The hypothesis, if it is even appropriate to use the term in this context, for the second phase of this study was that applying the new knowledge generated during the first phase would help the congregation in its transition.

Furthermore, the principal theoretical hypothesis of the second study based on the theory of secularization was that, like one's religious memory (affiliation) or one's ethnic identity would be the most significant factor in determining one's future religious affiliation.

### ***3.3. The Scope and Limitations of the Project***

#### **The Scope of This Study**

The scope of this study is the specific transition process that started in the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thunder Bay in 1985, when the congregation first started planning for the future and had their first meeting with the Division of Canadian Missions. At the present time, the congregation is in the active phase of the mission for



the strategy that they adopted. The study is divided into two stages. The first stage included the strategy development and the second stage yet another study to follow-up how the strategy had worked.

The purpose of the first stage of the study was to develop strategies that would be helpful in the specific situation of the congregation (Glad 1995). The first stage of the transition included developing a mission statement, doing the first congregational survey, planning for the mission, changing the name of the church, selling the old church, relocating, building the new church, doing a daycare needs assessment, calling the first mission developer/pastor, and going forward and doing the mission according to the vision of the adopted strategy.

The second stage of the study is part of the Participatory Action Research (PAR) process to evaluate the started process and to develop new strategies for the future. The second stage of this transition included finishing the building of the church, dedication of the new church, continuing with the mission, integrating with the community, planning for the apartment/condominium project, doing another congregational survey, calling the second mission pastor and starting the first stage of the condominium project.

### The Limitations of This Study

The empirical-analytical studies were meant to assist this specific project. In a process like this, decisions have to be made according to the best available information, even in the face of insufficient information and valuing the knowledge of the community. That is the reason why the Whitehead/Whitehead and Participatory Action Research methods were used. The emphasis of these studies and the whole project was on "nowness" and practical usefulness.

This study was meant to assist me as the pastor, the congregation and its leadership to manage this project. It is a study in a very specific situation, limited to the area of Thunder Bay. The study is of only one ethnic group, Finnish, and only one denomination, Lutheran. The study tries to provide the congregational leadership with

the information that is required to make the basic decision of the direction of the transition.



## 4. METHODS

The combination of methods were chosen because there was a need for a method which would enable a research project which would not just study and follow-up but actually influence the process of transition. The use of Participatory Action Research and Whitehead/Whitehead methods also enabled planned and controlled transition. The longitudinal research project furthermore made it possible to study the actual process.

### *4.1. Participatory Action Research Method*

#### **4.1.1. Introduction**

Participatory Action Research (PAR) is not a single discipline anchored in a particular academic department but rather a perspective shared by a wide array of scientists. Participatory Action Research usually involves several theoretical and methodological approaches. As it is with many PAR projects, this process under study is open-ended and will probably continue into the near future.

PAR takes time and trust when a group of people collectively enter into a living process of intentional change. The group has to examine their reality, consider their options, analyze their situation and consider the possible liberating options. It is the group itself that makes the questions and decides what questions are pursued and how. When a group enters into a transition process like this, it is not yet known what questions will arise and how it will react. It takes courage to face the fundamental questions of the life circumstances of an immigrant. Why things are the way they are, for an individual or for a group, in this case the immigrant and the congregation. The purpose of this transition process is to create new opportunities through intentional change.



#### 4.1.2. Principles of Participatory Action Research

There are many ways to try to capture the essence of Participatory Action Research (PAR). One is to compare Liberatory Inquiry (e.g. Participatory Action Research) to other methods, i.e., Empirical-Analytical Inquiry and Interpretive Inquiry. As a method, PAR is dialectic of praxis (action-reflection process) within a particular historical and social context. Participants are active with ownership over questions, objectives and process. Many different, often creative, methods are used in PAR (Greenwood and Levin 1998, 70). Empirical-Analytical Inquiry on the other hand is experimental and begins with a hypothesis. Validity and reliability are important in empirical research. People are the object of the study. Empirical-Analytical method produces quantitative data and is frequently dependent on complex statistics. Theory and practice are not directly related (Smith 1997, 180, and Maguire 1987, 22).

In the PAR method the problem originates in the community itself and the problem is defined, analyzed, and solved by the community. One of the pioneers of Participatory Action Research, Marja-Liisa Swantz, emphasized the importance of initiation by the community or the group itself already in 1974 (Swantz 1975). The ultimate goal of the participatory research is the transformation of social reality and the improvement of the lives of the people involved. The beneficiaries of the research are the members of the community itself. PAR involves the full and active participation of the community in the center of the research process. This method has the potential to create a greater awareness in the people of their own resources and activate them for self-reliant development. For a reason, it can be understood as a more scientific method of research in that the participants of the community in the research process facilitate a more accurate and authentic analysis of social reality. The researcher is a committed participant and leader in the process of research, which leads to commitment on his/her part, rather than detachment (Hall 1984, 19-20).

Participatory Action Research is a holistic framework and because of that it is not easy to define. It is about life and it is a living



process. Research is an ongoing process of change, an aid to action, and not an end in itself. PAR relies on and activates the knowledge that already exists among the community and the process of learning and producing new knowledge. (Smith 1997, 173).

PAR is a dynamic process, acknowledging people as complex beings with different motivations, perceptions, capabilities, feelings, and relationships, but with shared problems and desires for community through a common effort. They reveal their life circumstances and the foundations of why things are the way they are. People in PAR are working to change the "status quo". This means giving birth to "the knowledge of hopeful dreams". People in a participatory action-research process can strengthen their commitment to a meaningful way of life (Ibid., 173 - 174).

Participatory Action Research is a collective process of knowledge generation whose objectives "include the transformation of power structures and relationships as well as the empowerment of oppressed people" (Brown and Tandon 1983, 279). This method has been used by adult educators and international development professionals working with oppressed peoples in the Third World, but also by academics in Canada and other industrialized countries who are interested in working towards social change. These researchers find PAR to be a method that can fundamentally transform relationships in communities because it does not just invite participation but requires it. (Ibid. 1983, 279 - 280).

PAR builds on certain values. Firstly, all people have the capacity to think and work for a better life. Secondly, knowledge and skills are to be shared. Thirdly, authentic commitment to shared goals is required from external and internal participants (Smith 1997, and Nash 1993). These values are very important for a church group because of its nature as a community where resources are shared for the common good (Nash 1993, 43). One of the great values of PAR is that people are not objects but full subjects. They are actively involved in decision making and in taking action. The group has the ownership of the resulting consequences and knowledge. In a PAR process the control of knowledge production is central to maintaining power (Tandon 1981, 23).



People who enter into this kind of a process will be participating in a cohesively dynamic process of action-reflection, which in PAR terms is called praxis. This kind of process is organic, ever changing, nonlinear, open, and continuous without predetermined time limits or fixed questions. The group moves between moments of analysis and education, investigation and action. The whole movement has a value by itself as to how something is done. Discussion is as important as what is being done. PAR values what people know and believe by using their present reality as a starting point and building on it. Because of the importance of the starting point, this method places vital importance on historical and current context, retrieving past history and relating this information to present circumstances and structures (Smith 1997, 185, 201 - 205).

PAR is an evolving praxis between practice and theory: from the practice comes the theory; from the theory, the practice. In the same way the reflection-action, action-reflection spiraling movement extends to the future. Think, discover or recover, and do. One can picture this reflection and action as alternating in foreground and background. Using only one process is limiting. Reflection only leads to passivity and action only leads to uncontrolled, sometimes chaotic, results. PAR is thoughtful reflection on reality corresponding with informed action (Ibid., 186 - 187).

People tend to polarize ideas into dualities and present them in an "either/or" fashion, thereby implying a black or white choice between ideas. This linear way of thinking can restrict critical analysis and the imagining of alternatives. PAR is based primarily on dialectics which means that elements and forces are acting in relation to each other (Ibid., 185-187).

It has been pointed out by the critics of PAR that there is a potential that "consensus tyranny", "tyranny of the group", or "tyranny of the committed" can overshadow consideration of individual welfare. This can become a severe difficulty, especially at times when increasingly difficult problems surface between often competing motivations and interest (Ibid., 186). It is important to attend to the group as a whole and to individuals as separate beings if any progressive momentum is to be developed. This is a difficult task when different polarities start to polarize and people start to take stands not only behind different opinions and options but also according to the



dynamics of the group. These dynamics may have been established long ago and such barriers are hard to overcome (Ibid., 187).

The role of the researcher is both on the field as a member of the group and as an academic. The researcher is in mutual engagement with the community and in this capacity has committed oneself to research that is directly usable by that community. On the other hand he/she is part of an intellectual community that expects its own return from the research. The researcher's orientation is thus twofold. The community that one studies measures the success of the research not by reactions of the academic colleagues but by the assistance it affords to the particular community itself. This creates a tension between theory and practice. If practice is rejected, the researcher is back to straight academic papers. If theory is rejected, the project is not contributing to the intellectual community of academics. However, it is after all because of the strictly intellectual work done in the academy that participatory researchers have something to contribute to the communities they study (Nash 1993, 120 - 121).



### 4.1.3. PAR process

A PAR process consists of spiraling moments. Each present moment incorporates the past and the future. Following is the framework for Participatory Action Research Praxiology:

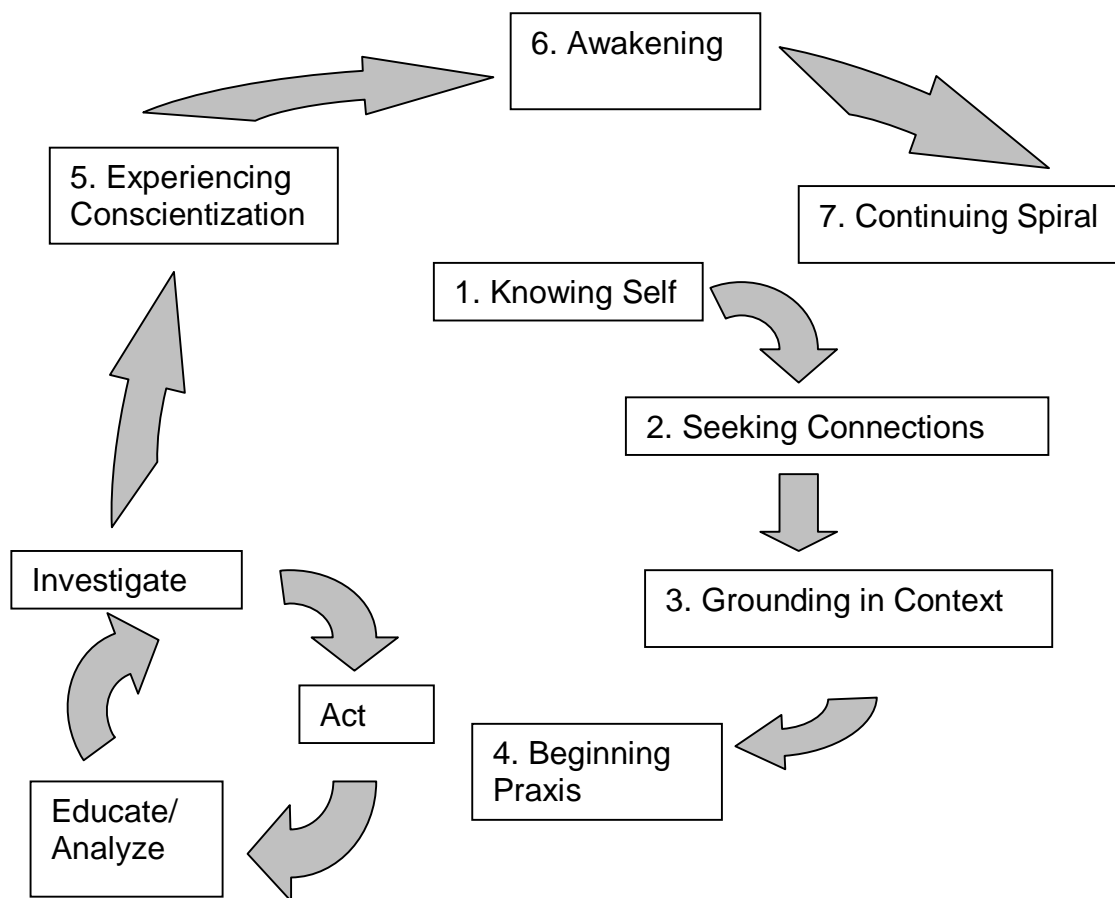


Figure 4.1.3. - 1. Framework for Participatory Action Research Praxiology (Fals-Borda, and M.Rahman 1991 in Smith 1997, 198)

1. Knowing self (Numbers refer to Figure 4.1.3. - 1.). It is the inner tension and the need that is the beginning of the process. This

tension forms the personal motivation that is needed to seek out others and to look for a change. It could well be that a researcher enters a community without even knowing anything about PAR (Seymourin in Smith 1997,199). One's own sense of service and mission can lead to search for a different methodology (Arratia in Arratia and de la Maza and Law in Smith 1997, 199).

2. Seeking Connections. Shared concern and common interest leads individuals to seek others, to share stories and experiences with each other. In doing this they start to recognize their common interest. This is the beginning of trust building that is so crucial for the PAR process to succeed. When a researcher enters a group, he/she has to do something for the group before they are willing to trust the person. It is important that they know that the researcher is not there just to take advantage of them and somehow do things that have negative repercussions. (Arratia in Arratia and de la Maza in Smith 1997, 201). When connections are established, sense of community starts to build up and creates the potential energy.

3. Grounding in Context. It is important that people who recognize the common questions also know the context. Connection to context creates the energy points necessary to start a movement. Even though each group's energy points and goals differ, Max-Neef<sup>7</sup> describes nine universal, fundamental human needs to which all energy points, issues or strengths that generate energy, relate: subsistence, protection, affection, understanding, participation, idleness, creation, identity, and freedom (Max-Neef 1991, 32-33). He describes also a tenth one, transcendence, but notes that it is not universal. Grounding in context is the time to explore the energy, clarifying the real issues, discovering the strengths and setting the goals. The starting point for praxis is a focus on fundamental human needs as determined by the people who are impacted by the problem. To be grounded in context is to discover the vital importance of really knowing complex circumstances and uncovering the relevant operating forces.

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<sup>7</sup> Max-Neef is an Chilean economist, alternative economist and has been a presidential candidate in election.

4. Beginning Praxis. As stated earlier, the purpose of PAR is social change. When participants begin the PAR process they engage themselves in an ongoing praxis, in a back-and-forth dialectic of reflection. In this process important questions are raised, investigated and acted on. It is crucial that the group is critical in order to get to the real questions and problems without forgetting to pay attention to the shifts in power. The beginning of praxis can be divided into three phases (Macquire 1987, 29-31).

- The first, emergent, phase of the beginning praxis is to analyze the situation and educate themselves. During this phase the members of the group define their situation. Things start to get names. Freire calls this "naming reality" where people are trying to get a more comprehensive picture of their context and themselves (Freire 1970, 1990). Analysis of data takes place throughout the study and is shared continually with the participants and all members of the research team (local and academic advisors).
- The second phase emphasizes investigation and creating transforming possibilities. This is to learn more and get more information.
- The third phase is to act. During and after the action the participants talk together establishing a sense of distance with the events.

This process of action reflection continues during the whole project, and is still going on as participants talk together. The group is looking retrospectively reflecting on what had happened and why.

The questions belong to the participants. They gain ownership over the questions as they make the final decisions of what is pursued and how. In PAR questions take many forms; they can be written down or remain oral, be formally worded, and simple or complex. The questions can change with experience over time as new, more relevant ones are discovered.

The participants agree on how the major decisions are to be made and that they actively contribute to decisions about what actions and steps are to be taken and how. Often an outsider takes on the facilitation role guiding the use of different methods to generate data in differing forms (Smith 1997, 211).





When group members systemize their experiences, organize and analyze the data they find gaps and relationships, thus building a new level of understanding. Information and new knowledge that they use and identify as relevant and credible is the social validation of the content. Sometimes subjective, personal opinions or beliefs become more objective once they become common by the members (Ibid., 212).

People want information about their situation and context but they also want more, something to look forward to. The movement is created from what exists now (the reality) to what could be (the vision). The focus should not be on prediction but possibilities. (Ibid., 188).

5. Experiencing Conscientization. (Term "Conscientizacao" was introduced by Paulo Freire in education, 1970, 1990.) Conscientization is a moment of disintegration and reintegration when group members understand elements of internal and social oppression. When people share the same consciousness, they have a shared capacity to perceive, understand, and transform. Conscientization means action, a concrete action of consciousness (Ibid. 1970).

Law describes this process in the following way:

"Participants felt very strongly about the research experience. They stated that the research process, with the focus groups and interviews, had allowed them to express feelings so that they could then move on to facilitate change on behalf of their children. They discovered that others had similar issues and difficulties to face .... As a result, they were no longer as isolated (Law in Smith 1997, 216).

As the result of conscientization, changes start to happen on an inner level. People become aware of their situation, their reality, and their options. When members reach a critical stage of consciousness concrete action is about to start happening. Individual knowledge accumulates and becomes social knowledge as the group verifies what it knows and understands (Smith 1997, 215).

6. Awakening: Transforming. Awaken means the part of the process when one possesses fresh creativity for construction. People discover a greater sense of self and other, individuals and the group gain in inner and shared power. This is an act of transcendence, the



group is again submerged in an unclear vision. If the group is able to continue the PAR spiral, it will enter a new phase. This is again a critical phase, the group is vulnerable because of the risk-taking, cooperation and openness (Ibid., 216, 217). Complex problems require complex solutions (Williams in Spittal et.al in Smith 1997, 217).

7. Continuing the Spiral. These cumulative moments of knowing self, seeking connections, grounding in context and focussing on fundamental needs, beginning praxis, experiencing conscientization, and awakening are often overlapping or simultaneous and occur within an individual or for a group. As said before PAR is an open-ended process: dialectic of reflection and action incorporating the past and spiraling into the future.

#### **4.1.4. Developing a PAR Movement**

##### ***4.1.4.1. Expelling Invisible Oppressors.***

One has found that in PAR there are three important stages when starting the thinking process and breaking the status quo:

The starting point of a PAR process is a necessity. People's needs spark off the process. It can be said that the group moves from feeling their needs to thinking and understanding their situation, to action and transformation. It is not so much that people become more informed but rather their needs drive transformation (Simonson and Bushaw 1993, 28 and Smith, 1997,220,221). Usually we are not willing to change unless we have to (Stark 1996, 55; Glad 1995, 101-108; Glad 2000, 149-155). One of the first steps is to become aware of the needs and have the courage to face the present reality. Boal called the invisible oppressors - the internal states of fear, guilt, loneliness, emptiness, arrogant self-interest, or bored disinterest, the "cops in the head" (Boal 1995, 8).

"In a strange contradiction, when we demand secure outcomes - false cushions of protection - we actually cocoon



ourselves in anxious insecurity. ... Too often we then treat ourselves and others violently, manifesting our internal state through subtle or blatant humiliation and control. We are easily manipulated by others because of inconsistent belief patterns and insecure identity (a security of self - I know who and what I am and we are - which is very different from the false security of things)" (Smith 1997, 220).

The invisible oppressors are those that we carry inside of us, we become alienated from ourselves and from others. Our blind and weak spots are always with us, they prevent us from ever seeing fully. Thus, to know clearly is to always retain a shadow of doubt. "This is doubt of wisdom: we can never know all" (Ibid., 221). But it is fair for individuals in a group to say "in this particular time and setting, we demonstrated a critical consciousness. We questioned a problem, unearthed root causes, understood personal and social forces to a deeper degree, and did something about our situation" (Freire 1970, and 1990, 73).

Energy Points. When people have strong feelings about a need or a problem, they are far more likely to take action. Paulo Freire developed a method to stimulate the energy of a group or community in order to break through apathy and create change (Freire 1970, and 1990; Hope, Timmel, and Hodzi 1984 and 1988, 40; Wallerstein and Bernstein 1988, 383). Facilitators determine the generative themes of a group or community - those themes that generate or elicit energy. This is often done through a listening survey or other methods in which facilitators listen and observe carefully: what words are used to describe the issues (Hope, Timmel, and Hodzi 1984 and 1988, 40).

The facilitators (see important terms and concepts at Hilldale p. 68) critically analyze their findings in order to determine the major generative themes. Each theme is seriously considered from an economical, political and cultural perspective in order to produce appropriate codes (Smith 1997, 228 - 229; see also Whitehead/Whitehead method 4.2.). Codes raise questions; they do not suggest solutions. Presentation of the codes help the participants to focus attention and stimulate discussion within the group (Smith 1997, 40).

Enabling Strategies. Participant ownership of decisions allows for the building of a strategic sequence of activities that is responsive to the evolving needs and rationale of the group. Encouraging creativity and risk-taking strategy awakens the imagination to new



possibilities helping participants to develop confidence and esteem (Smith 1997, 229; Glad 1995). "A growth strategy," as described by Srinivasan, "does not confer or bestow power but simply summons it forth, helps it to become manifest, causes it to rise as in a leavening process, helps to germinate and brings to fruition what is already there in a latent or dormant state" (Srinivasan 1992, 68). The challenge for the group is to match the moment with the right means.

#### ***4.1.4.2. Challenges of Participation***

PAR is a lengthy process that requires a long and intense commitment with a lot of tension and risk. To learn to know the context and understanding of people's circumstances, perceptions and relations takes a lot of time and energy. It also takes time for an external researcher to become one of the group (Dickson 1995, 646). It is also time consuming to try to figure out where these people are coming from? What do they want out of life? What is their vision? (Arratia in Arratia and de la Maza in Smith 1997, 230) In a PAR process an external researcher becomes a participant which can be something that we are not accustomed to. One will lose control of the questions and preset procedures or methods (Law in Smith 1997, 231 and Smith 1997, 231).

The challenge is to understand the participants and to accurately use their ideas as the basis for further discussions. There are times when researchers struggle to prevent their biases from impacting on their decisions. There is always the temptation to push too much too early or at the wrong time. Any hint of manipulation of the group would result in mistrust and the breakdown of the process (Law in Smith 1997, 232). For the researcher it is challenging to work simultaneously in several different contradictory worlds. One has to struggle both for legitimacy within academic circles, because PAR is outside conventional research paradigms, and for a facilitating role within the community (Dickson 1995, 646).

A long intense commitment to a project like this makes it very difficult to retain distance and it creates a kind of methodological dilemma (Spittal et al. in Smith 1997, 232). As meaningful social



change takes time it is unavoidable that time pressure sometimes takes over. The group may get so anxious to get results that at times this pressure takes over but at the same time acts as a catalyst. Even though the group is in a project for the future, there is always a temptation to think only of the present. PAR is difficult because it takes time (Ibid., 233).

One reason why there are so few records of PAR projects in developed countries is that many projects have been done by individuals and groups who have not thought of their work as "participatory research". It is very likely that there are ongoing processes of social investigation and action, which can be accurately identified as participatory action research though they are not conceptualized that way. One good example of such process is church-based community organizing (Nash 1993, 39).

#### **4.1.5. The Principles of the Hilldale Project**

The Hilldale project started as a community action project with the assistance of a researcher who applied the method of theological reflection and action reflection. It was not until the second phase of the process that the methodology of PAR was more consciously understood as a method and conceptualized.

At Hilldale we were trying to link knowing and doing through a three-part process of investigation, education and action. The members of the community participated actively in problem posing and solving. This educational process helped to uncover previously hidden personal and social knowledge and developed skills, which increased their capacity to "be actors on the world". This led the group to collective action, empowering people to work to transform existing power structures and relationships that oppressed them.

The group acted and investigated collectively. They decided at their committee and council meetings to do the survey on their major questions and actions. Several groups, like Seniors Circle, Youth Group and Sunday School, were actively involved in the



congregational inquiry. They were seeking new understanding of their situation and context using multiple means for knowledge. Among other problem-posing and problem-solving techniques, Hilldale used systems theory and polarization. One of the problems was that Hilldale was blinded by its past success in Finnish ministry and religious memory. The group got so involved in its ministry among Finnish speaking immigrants that they forgot to follow up what was happening around with the second and third generation siblings.

The members were asking important questions, ones that were their very own, and investigating in order to understand the forces at play in the congregation and the consequences of their actions to them: "What is going to happen to our congregation", "Is our congregation going to die like so many churches have?", "Is somebody going to take us over", "Is the Synod going to take our church once we cannot afford to keep it up anymore?", "Where are our children, will they ever come back to their church?"

This group developed intended liberation by developing a compassionate culture. They cared about each other and strengthened their commitment through a shared struggle. They were asking themselves fundamental questions and found some common answers. Question, "Who are we?" led them to think about their ethnic identity and how important it was to them. "Why are we here?" "Did we do the right thing when we moved to Canada?" There were some different reasons but a common experience was that they had all immigrated to Canada. To the question "What do we believe?" the group came up with an answer from their own Mission Statement: "We are originally a Finnish Lutheran Congregation with a strong history and sense of independence and still follow the 'Folk Church' tradition of being open and willing to serve everybody." When they asked themselves "What is our purpose as individuals, community and church?", the group developed a vision for the mission. Now they had a dream. After that it was only natural to ask "How to reach the goal?" and "How can we work together?" That was the time of praxis as they worked out a plan and strategy to reach their dreams.

At Hilldale the congregation was able to figure out that they were in the mission not just for the results, with more groups, more members and financial support, but for the sake of the value of the mission itself. The Hilldale Mission statement says, "building relationships, building the community, and Serving Others With The Gospel of Jesus Christ"



(Appendix 2). The group reminded itself constantly that they were not to get something back from the people they were trying to reach, but to serve without expecting anything back. This does not sound like a good business idea but the group believed that "what goes around comes around".

#### **4.1.6. Important Terms and Concepts of the PAR at Hilldale**

##### **The people**

In this project the main group already existed, the Independent Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thunder Bay est. 1950. The Finnish immigrant community in Thunder Bay is ca 12.000 - 15.000 depending how Finnish is determined. If we exclude those who are members of other churches, Finnish or not, and also those who do not have religious affiliation, this community can be divided into three categories according to their commitment to the Lutheran Church.

The inner circle includes those who are called "the active members."<sup>8</sup> This group of people is described by the by-laws of the ELCIC as people who attend worship services regularly, commune and support financially, in this case ca. 320 persons. The second circle consists of non-active members who have joined the congregation at one point but have not fulfilled the requirements of an active member within the last two years. This group is ca. 2000 including all those who have been baptized, ca. 1200 and confirmed ca. 1200.<sup>8</sup> The third group of people are those who have been baptized and been members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland but after moving to Thunder Bay have not joined the Church. Most of them consider themselves as members and use the services of the Church as needed. Most importantly all these people have religious and emotional ties to the Finnish Lutheran Church and are its affiliates.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Because Church has no official registry and the records are not usually up to date, it is impossible to have exact numbers. These numbers are based on the annual reports to ELCIC.

<sup>9</sup> Hilldale Lutheran Church is described in more detail in chapter 7. "Characteristics of Hilldale Lutheran Church".

## The Mutual Trust

If one has to name one crucial building block of a PAR project, it would definitely be trust. There are several unsuccessful examples where a project has been started without first building mutual trust. One reason for that could quite well be that this part of the project is very time consuming and has to be done with respect, integrity and commitment. Building a high level of trust is necessary for a project of this magnitude to succeed (Arratia in Arratia and de la Maza in Smith 1997, 201; Smith 1997, 200-202 :Simonson and Bushaw 1993, 33). Lack of trust can destroy a project or make the process impossible (Simonson and Bushaw 1993, 33).

People were the essence of this project. It was a group of individuals with common needs, and with specific purposes. Continual dialogue among members and the community was critical to the process and supported the climate of mutual trust. It took me four years and coming back as one of them, an immigrant and not just a visitor, to build the trust that was needed for such a risky project. One reason was that the community was so used to seeing pastors come and go in two to four years. As it is with new pastors in North America, setting there is usually a honeymoon at the beginning of the ministry until real issues start to surface. This is true on a personal and on a group level. The new person who enters the group is tested. It is not easy to earn acceptance as being one of them. Pastor must deal with the issues of their personal and social life. However, it was not just the trust between the researcher and the group but also between the members of the group.

## The Facilitators

Those initiating PAR have to have the courage to take risks, work against great odds coupled with an urgent will to learn. One of the biggest challenges of any researcher is that one has to commit oneself to the project for a long time without knowing and without control of the end result. This means that the facilitators have to work hard for a long time. The facilitators had an important role at Hilldale. They were the lay leaders of the congregation who used their authority to implement the PAR. They had gained their trust throughout the





years at the functions of the church and the Finnish community in Thunder Bay. It is very hard to name them all except the most important ones. Those included, among few others, lay preachers, chairperson of the church council, - mission committee, - building committee and - ladies quild.

### The Questionnaires

In order to map out the situation several studies were made during the years and were analyzed by the people, mission committee, church council, and local and academic advisors. Two major congregational surveys were made in 1994 and 1998. In between we did a Daycare Needs Assessment study as part of the strategy of being a community church. The Daycare Needs Assessment was done to further develop one part of the transition process and community orientation. The Second Survey was done to evaluate how well the strategy that was created and followed was working.

### The Research and the Role of Researcher

When fundamental questions were raised about the direction of the action, a serious study was needed. Academic and local advisors/groups were established. The project included a local advisory group (mission committee), two local advisors and two academic advisors. The results of various inquiries, the two main surveys and other reports, were presented to the advisors, Mission Committee, Church Council and the Congregational meeting. These groups also interpreted the data and analyzed it together with the researcher. The first study was done to create new knowledge and to establish the strategy (Glad 1995). The second study was done to evaluate the project and to reconsider the direction of the transition.

In the first study somewhat untraditional Whitehead/Whitehead Method of theological reflection was used to reflect relevant historical and empirical information with the context (more about W/W method in 4.2.). According to the Whitehead/Whitehead Method, the researcher gathered information from three sources: Tradition (chapter 5), Cultural Information (chapter 6) and Experience (chapter 7). This gathered information was presented to and discussed at Church



Council and Mission Committee before the strategy for the transition was adopted.

As a researcher in the process, I used the classical empirical-analytical inquiry to gather information from the sources by two main inquiries, and several smaller inquiries. Traditional methods were used to compose the instrument and analyze the data. On a horizontal dimension the research process can be divided into the theoretical, operational and quantitative phases. On a vertical time dimension the research project can be divided into two main phases; preliminary inquiry to create the planning strategies and the follow-up study to create deeper understanding of the process.

It is also important to note the twofold role I, as the researcher, had as living and doing the research in Canada, and writing this study in Finland for the University of Helsinki. This gives me the unique opportunity to see the project from a Canadian and Finnish point of view. The role of the researcher is twofold also as a member of the group and as an academic (More in 4.1.2. Principles of Participatory Action Research). In this particular study, the researcher was also the senior pastor of the congregation.

The project had a unique opportunity because I, as the researcher was already part of the group and the congregation did not have to recruit a researcher from outside, which is always a risk. This opportunity was also a challenge for the researcher to retain the distance at the same time as being one of them. Furthermore, trust, which is essential for a PAR project and takes years to build, was already in place.

## Reflection

It is important to have time to consider the information gathered through research and questionnaires, and then to reflect on this information with the knowledge the people had to create new information. This reflection was based on formal and informal feedback from the group and the community. It was an ongoing dialog that shaped the project. Listening and allowing everybody to express their feelings was done formally and informally.

Because the project was in their own hands, and they also were responsible for the overall outcome and success of the mission,

reflection was done in different committees usually on a weekly basis. Plans were altered by what seemed to be working and what was not working. Weekly routines were to reflect on action, what was working and what was not - solving problems raised by the action.

### The Planning strategies

At the very beginning, there was a deep concern for the future of the congregation, together with the concern for the second and third generation. In 1986 the Canadian Missions of ELCIC approached the congregation suggesting that there would be the possibility to join with another congregation in Thunder Bay and to relocate together in the new area by Hilldale road. At that time, the congregation was not yet ready for such a radical move. However, that was the beginning of dreams and planning of possible strategies to make the dreams come true. The congregation made plans for the future based on new knowledge, dreams and visions.

### The Action

All the planning started to become more real when the final decision to proceed was made. The congregation started to make their Mission Statement to help focus on their action (Appendix 2). The congregation started to look for a new name that would be more inclusive. The Mission Committee started to work on the Mission pastor's job description, looking for candidates for the call. The Building Committee started to look for an architect and proceed with zoning issues. The Church Council worked together with Committees to facilitate the transition process. The Council also prepared the financial plans with budgets, and planned how to raise the money.

### New revised plans

The group repeated steps four and five of the PAR process (see TABLE 4.1.3. - 1.). Based on the second survey, new plans were made and the cycle of PAR continued. A new way of praxis has been learned and it can be used in the future to solve new evolving problems and challenges. These were all used to help participants better understand

their issues, as well as use their knowledge to take action. The Structure of PAR is a spiral: need - study - action - reflection - and the cycle repeats itself.

#### **4.1.7. The PAR Process at Hilldale**

1. Knowing self (Numbers refer to FIGURE 4.1.3.-1.). As mentioned before, it is the inner tension and the need that is the beginning of the process. In my personal case, it was my own sense of service and mission as a pastor. I felt already in 1987 that an opportunity to work for a vision together with congregation was opening up ahead of me. I began intentionally in 1991 to search for a way to cope with the need of the congregation to survive. I had a strong sense that something needed to be done to try to help the congregation from diminishing. I started looking for sources of information and training. Later on in 1992, I rediscovered the Doctor of Ministry program in Minneapolis where I had previously taken some continuing education courses. As is quite often the case in PAR projects, somebody takes the facilitator's role. In this project it was I who was given the role of a researcher and guide to use the different methods and techniques.

2. Seeking Connections. I started to share my concern already in 1987 about the future of the congregation and found that I was not alone. The members of the congregation and I had a common interest. We started more intentionally in 1991 to get together around coffee tables, in homes and on the street corners to talk about our concern and our options. This common interest of the future of the congregation brought us closer together and started to build the trust that is so crucial for the process to succeed. We were sharing our feelings of trust, building the sense of community and creating the potential energy.

3. Grounding in Context. The group spent the years 1991 to 1993, on top of the fact that they already knew quite a few people in the community, to test the ground and to get a taste of what the community thought about our building project. The members of the group were well aware of the power structure in the congregation: who had the real



power, and the key people in the community. It was well known that some people in the Finnish community, including the church, had more influence financially and politically. These key people also included the spiritual leaders from different revival movements within the congregation. This connection to context created the first energy points to create the movement. It was time to explore the energy, clarify the real issues, discover the strengths and set the goals.

4. Beginning Praxis. We developed our first questionnaire in 1993-1994 together with the Mission Committee, which functioned also as the local advisory group, two local advisors, two academic advisors and the Church Council. Writing a thesis was part of my Doctor of Ministry degree. Each doctoral candidate was appointed a local advisors to help ground the research in local context and academic advisors to ground it to academic studies. Various sub-groups were also asked to give feedback on the questionnaire, including the Sunday School Committee and Seniors' Group. When we were doing together our first Congregational Survey, it helped the members of the group to analyze and educate themselves about the state of the congregation. In and of itself this process of making the questionnaire helped the group to "name reality".

Some fundamental questions about the state and the future of the congregation were raised:

- What is the problem?
- How does this problem make us feel?
- What is our current situation?
- Why are things the way they are now? (causes, history)
- What could be? (vision of the future, goal)
- What do we need to learn?



- What do we need to do?

The second phase was to investigate the present state of the congregation and the process ahead. The above mentioned questions, were discussed in all small groups. For a long time these questions were also the topic on Bay Street (the "Finnish Street in Thunder Bay where most of the Finnish businesses are located), and in our Finnish Newspaper, "Canadan Uutiset". People were excited but at the same time scared. Some were pessimistic, as is always the case when some big changes are about to happen. A small group was genuinely concerned that this might eventually lead to a situation where the Synod would take over the church; that Finnish ministry in Thunder Bay will come to an end with "kielinen" (an impression of somebody other than Finn who speaks the English language) to take over. Some of the seniors were happy with how things were and were opposing any changes. All this criticism and opposition forced us to ask more questions, such as:

- What else do we need to know about our situation, context, history and Christian tradition? What questions do we have?
- Why were we really getting into this? What were the underlying motivations?
- Who raised the concern and the questions? Was/is this, a mutual concern or just an idea of the core group?
- How could we have found/find out more? What methods should have been/be used?
- What were/are the risks?



- What kinds of recourses would we need? What kind of skills?
- How much would this cost?
- What did the new information mean?

All this analyzing and learning (self-education) happened before, during and after we did the first congregational survey in 1994. These questions helped us to formulate the questionnaire and also to analyze the data. The momentum started to build and we were ready to make the final decisions and commit ourselves to the process. We spent considerable time formulating the mission statement of Hilldale Lutheran Church, which ended up being also one of my projects at the Doctor of Ministry program (Appendix 2).

The third phase was to act. After the results of the survey were analyzed and studied in 1994, we were ready to move ahead. We still debated with the options for action. Should we stay at the present location or should we move into the new neighborhood? Should we call a Mission pastor now or after we have relocated or renovated? We did a feasibility study already in 1993 of the cost of renovating, expanding our present premises, buying some more land at our present location, or to move into a new neighborhood. The feasibility study showed quite clearly that it would cost at least the same amount of money to expand at our present location than what it would cost to move into a new neighborhood. The Church Council thought that it was much more feasible to build a new church than renovate the old one.

Furthermore, the Church council decided that the mission was the priority. The mission, as we already understood, was the whole reason for this process. At this time the group already started to make preliminary plans for the big move. Different options were considered. The Council had talks with other Lutheran congregations in the city. We suggested a plan to move together with another congregation, to combine our resources and offered that they would take care of the English ministry. Later, the congregation learned that this plan would not have been the most suitable. The Finnish church had its own and



distinct English ministry among those who were already affiliated with the church.

The Church Council called a Congregational meeting in fall of 1994 which decided to go ahead and sell the old church (many of the builders of the old church were present), relocate and build the new church, and call the Mission Pastor. This was a package deal for the congregation since the land was sold by Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) Church Extension Fund with the purchase price and with the condition that a new mission would be started.

Now that the decision was made, new questions emerged.

- How can we finance the project?
- How and when shall we start?
- How can we overcome the problems?
- Who will do what?
- What are the risks?
- How will we know that it works?
- What new problems will be created?

Method/Techniques within praxis. The group spent a lot of time discussing and prioritizing these major decisions. As many members as possible were involved, actively contributing to the decisions made. These meetings were held at the old church basement on Secord Street. Everyone was encouraged to express his or her opinions. Some of the meetings happened after worship service, some were specially called meetings and most of them in small groups. The purpose was to gain as much support as possible and to have as many people actively involved as possible because so much depended on the group's own financial, mental and physical support. During this time all kinds of methods were applied, sometimes systematic and sometimes very spontaneous such as videos and pancake breakfasts, etc. It was a process of discovering the abilities of the group as a whole.





The transitional process was difficult and it was common that members of the group did not know what to do. Sometimes the unsolved problems seemed much more difficult than the group's ability and resources. It happened several times that the process "hit the wall". At times the project seemed to be more than the congregation was able to handle, and at the end I found myself very burned out. It was hard to find a buyer for the old church and time was running out for the financial arrangements. The zoning change for the new property from "future residential" to "institutional" was much more complex than anyone thought. There was a misunderstanding about how the excess land was to be developed. The architect could not finish his work on time and the project was in danger of falling apart. A new architect was hired and groundbreaking was about two months later than scheduled. It was snowing and we were still pouring concrete.

We started the actual mission by preparing a brochure of the new Hilldale Lutheran Church to be distributed in the new neighborhood. Our plan was to visit every home in the neighborhood even before the new church was finished. But it was more difficult and time consuming than we thought. It took us over 6 months to make the first contact in the neighborhood. The situation got even more difficult because of a conflict with another group, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission in Thunder Bay (FELM). When the Hilldale Lutheran Church started its mission in the community, this competing group, FELM, with support from Finland and the Lutheran Church-Canada (LC-C, commonly known as Missouri Synod), was organized to lure members of the congregation to worship in their (LC-C) services. The Hilldale congregation found it very hurtful, especially at a time when everybody was working so hard for the transition and was stretched to the limit. This branch of Suomen Evankeliumiyhdistys, a revival movement from Finland, was especially successful among those who were in opposition or did not want to commit themselves to this project. This kind of competition was stretching the resources of the congregation to the very limit. When the congregation was finally ready to begin services at the church, the Fire Marshal closed the doors just before Christmas because all firewalls were not complete. As usual, the project exceeded the budget, and the group members were forced to increase their personal financial contributions, as well as increase amounts of loaned money.



There were foggy periods, times when it was difficult to know which way to proceed, forcing individuals to find new ways and new resources. It kept amazing everybody what could be accomplished when people have a common vision and they work together. It seemed that what was accomplished together was more than the sum of the members. These times of tension, frustration, disappointments, anger and failure made the group even stronger. Engagement in PAR reveals individual motivations, fears, and intellectual positions. Some hesitate, some withdraw and some continue.

The facilitators had a very important role in trying to keep the spirits high. The facilitators had to constantly remind the members why we were doing this and where we were heading. Those involved in this transition project struggled to build, not to resist or destroy. This creative capability is dependent on the participants' mental and emotional readiness, their willingness to risk and their ability to achieve agreement and mutual support.

5. Experiencing Conscientization. The transition process that the members of Hilldale Lutheran Church went through had a lot to do with their identity. As discussed later, an immigrant's identity is not just our history and present, but also our future. The congregation had a long history of independence, as they did not belong to the Lutheran Church body, until 1983. By starting this mission, they proved to themselves that they had something to share with their community. Conscientization is a moment of disintegration and reintegration when group members understand elements of internal and social oppression. When people share the same consciousness, they have a shared capacity to perceive, understand, and transform. Together this group was able to create a movement of social change. Conscientization means action, a concrete action of consciousness. As someone has said during similar moment of a process: "When ideas, actions, and people are put together at the right time and place, something tangible occurs. Ideas become flesh and blood - it is a moment of truth" (Ornelas in Smith 1997, 214). The research project allowed the group members to express their feelings and then to move to facilitate change on behalf of their children.

6. Awakening, Transforming. This process possessed fresh creativity for construction and enabled us to discover a greater sense of self and others thus gaining inner and shared power. One can not but wonder how much power is needed to build a new church. It was a



constant challenge to keep the spirits high. It was not just the challenge to raise the money but to build the whole church with volunteers. Women, volunteers themselves also, provided warm meals every day for the volunteers. This movement created greater spirit energy. Through this building process, the group had common experiences and concerns. More and more people began to feel committed to the parent group and the process of action. It was an exhilarating moment when things started to happen - "We can do it". It was something greater than themselves, much more than the sum of the parts.

But with this act of transcendence, the group was again submerged in an unclear vision. Emotionally it was a challenge for congregational leadership and especially the facilitators. Things did not go as planned, were harder to do and often failed. More and more was needed from the group not just financially but also spiritually and mentally. Quite often we compared ourselves to the Israelites in their journey from Egypt to Palestine through the desert. There were times when it was hard to believe that the group would be able to make it. But the group was able to clear its vision and enter a new phase. The sense of vulnerability and risk taking developed trust in ourselves as well as in others.

7. Continuing the Spiral. As said before, PAR is an open-ended process of dialectic, reflection and action and is still going on at Hilldale.

Research questions were raised within praxis as the process continued. Like in the first survey, the questionnaires for the second survey were developed together with the participants, local and academic advisors, facilitator and the researcher. At the time of the second survey some of the questions were changed, some added and some discarded based on the feedback from new and more relevant information (See 4.3. Composing the Instrument, 7. Characteristics of Hilldale Lutheran Church, and 8. Affiliation to Hilldale Lutheran Church).

Commitment to transformation means long-term involvement. It has taken a long time to be able to reframe my work and accomplishments, legitimizing an incredibly valuable and intense learning experience. I now understand how important commitment is. For me it was a 13-year period with the congregation, but the process



is still going strong with those who have committed themselves to the church for decades. In 2001 they were finally able to begin to solve their financial issues when they started building the condominium project, which was planned to take care of the mortgage. Since the congregation owns the land, it is now able to sell it with profit for the company that is building the condominiums.

#### **4.2. Whitehead/Whitehead Method**

The Whiteheads' method of theological reflection was guiding the first phase of the process. The challenge of this theological reflection in a ministry setting is to develop methods of access to the tradition that are appropriate not to the scripture scholar or systematic theologian, but to those who are working directly within the congregation (Whitehead and Whitehead 1980, 12).

The three sources of religiously relevant information are:

##### **1. Tradition**

Pluriformity is the character of tradition that has special relevance for this method of reflection in ministry. This method assumes an understanding of Christian pluralism as a sign of richness. Time gives still another level of pluriformity resulting from historical change. In this specific congregational setting the historical change is especially significant. Throughout Canadian history the meaning of the word "Canadian", and what it means from the point of view of cultural transaction, has gone through a significant transformation. Christian tradition is consulted to provide parameters for the proposal for the strategy, which was the final goal of the first stage of this study. This reflection was used to introduce the diversity of belief, which constitutes the larger Christian Tradition. From the viewpoint of this study the question was "how has the Christian church responded to the common challenge of cultural transaction?"



## 2. Experience

Experience represents the source of information, as it is available within the individual minister and within the specific community where the reflection occurs. Experience in Whitehead/Whitehead Method model refers to this specific situation of “this minister and this community concerning this pastoral concern”. “The challenge of this practical method is to assist the minister and the community to come to a reflective grasp of their own experience about a specific pastoral concern” (Ibid., 18).

## 3. Cultural information

In the Whiteheads’ method cultural information includes both historical and contemporary aspects of a culture. This includes philosophical and political interpretations of the human community. A third category is the contribution of social sciences to our understanding of the person and society. Cultural information is separable from the more immediate experience of the minister and the reflecting community.

The Whiteheads’ method of theological reflection includes three stages:

### 1. Attending

Attending is a process of seeking out information on a particular pastoral concern that is available from personal experience, Christian tradition, and cultural sources. Four basic sources of information have been used in this study: The historic information, the tradition historic information, the sociological information and the congregational survey.

### 2. Assertion

Assertion means to engage the information from these four sources in a process of mutual clarification and challenge in order to expand and deepen religious insight. The assertion is done at the end of each chapter and in the fifth chapter, entitled “Summary and Conclusions.”



### 3. Decision

Decision is the final part of the method when it is time to move from insight through decision to concrete pastoral action. "... all three sources of information (personal experience, Christian tradition and cultural information) ... contribute to theological reflection in ministry" (Ibid., 23).

This method was used at the Finnish Evangelical Church of Thunder Bay in first (analyze and educate) and second (investigate) phase of the beginning praxis as part of the PAR process (See 4.1.3./4). This reflection involved three sources of religiously relevant information: Christian tradition, the experience of the community of faith, and the resources of the culture (see validity of PAR, triangulation in 4.5.1.)

Three sources of religiously relevant information at Hilldale were:

#### Tradition

- The history of the Finnish immigrants in Canada (5.1.)
- The Christian tradition's historic perspective of cultural transaction (5.2.)
- The Canadian tradition of cultural transaction (6.5.)

#### Cultural Information

- The assimilation and retention in Canada (2.1., 6.2.)
- Ethnic Identity (2.2.)
- Finnish Spirituality (6.3.)
- The general affiliation to Canadian churches (2.3., 6.4.)

#### Experience

- An analysis of the congregation was done using a congregational survey and applying systems theory in a brief case study. (7., 8.)



Based on the information from the sources mentioned above, the goal of this study and method was a pastoral and congregational decision and action in this specific situation.

The three stages of theological reflection at Hilldale included:

#### Attending

In more specific terms in this study, the basic sources of information are: the history of Finnish immigration, the tradition history of the Christian church in transition, the sociological study of ethnic communities, particularly Finnish, and the survey of our particular congregation.

#### Assertion

The information gathered from the sources was studied and shared with the congregation. The information was discussed in local advisory group/Mission Committee and Church Council before the strategy was adopted.

#### Decision

The main purpose of this study was to try to find the main direction for the transition. Is Hilldale Lutheran Church in transition to a Canadian congregation that does not emphasize its ethnic identity or is it in transition in which the congregation is intentionally trying to be empowered by their ethnic identity? All the other decisions should be based on this basic decision for the mission of this church. To be able to study all the information that potentially relates to this transition would have been too much for one study and that is why it was limited to provide the information that was accessible within the time frame of their decision making process. The first study (Glad 1994) was hoped to generate alternatives, help to choose among partial solutions, and to keep these choices accountable to the larger vision.

### ***4.3. Composing the Instrument***

The first questionnaire was developed together with the members of local advisory group/Mission Committee and academic

and local advisors. The main objective was to create a strategy and get information that would be helpful. The questionnaire was presented to the church council for their approval. The questionnaire for the second survey was developed based on the first questionnaire. Both questionnaires were translated into both languages and tested by the members of the congregation. Unclear questions were defined and options added or deleted according to the feedback. Comparison of the questionnaires in detail is presented in chapters seven and eight.

The theoretical framework implied to the development of the first questionnaire included The Whitehead/Whitehead Method as well as assimilation/retention (Newman 1987; Breton 1990, M.M. Gordon 1978) and secularization theories (Stark and Bainbridge 1985, Bibby 1990). The second survey was more intentionally part of the PAR process. It was composed to measure the success of the project and especially the affiliation to the church. One of the guiding theories for the development of this questionnaire was the secularization theory and more specifically Reginal Bibby's theory on secularization, which is a Canadian version of the "innovation argument" by Durkheim, Stark and Bainbridge.

The second questionnaire tried to retain as many original questions of the first survey as possible to provide reference for the analysis. R. Bibby's main argument is that Canadians retain very faithfully their childhood affiliation to their church. For the second survey, some questions were added to measure the childhood affiliation (Questions no 30 - 34). This was done to validate his theory in this group, for comparison and to validate the data. Some of the questions (no. 12,13) were also formed as close as possible to those used in Canadian national surveys to compare the sample to the general population. The late G.A. Rawlyk did a survey of Canadian Evangelism in 1993 and some of the questions of that study have been implemented to the questionnaire to help place this sample into the Canadian context (Rawlyk 1996).

Some very specific questions (no. 7a, 35) were added to measure the ethnicity affiliation. This is the one very specific scope of the research project within the Participatory Action Research. Furthermore, these questions were used to test the fundamental direction of the strategy and to help to provide guidance for future direction of the Hilldale project.



When composing the instrument, some standard background questions were used. These included gender, age by category, marital status, membership status, denominational affiliation (if other than Hilldale), and place of residence (no. 1 - 6).

The second group of questions (no. 7a-f) is an instrument to measure why respondents belong and come to Hilldale Lutheran Church (no. 8a-f). The questions (no. 10a-d) of vision and mission of the church follow these questions. The three next question sets measure attitudes toward ethical, theological and spiritual statements (no. 11 - 13). These sets are mainly from the first survey but are now more in line with Rawlyk's instruments. To be able to respond to the needs of the members they were asked about their main concern in life (no. 14a-f).

The third set of questions measures church attendance or absence (no. 15 - 17), and the reasons for increase or decrease (no. 18,19). This group of questions includes which service they attend (no. 23) and what time would be convenient for them (no. 24), followed by questions about the present state (no. 25 - 27) of the church, its intentions (no. 28 - 29) and the future (no. 21, 22).

The next instrument measures the affiliation to the church from childhood to confirmation (no. 30 - 33). Included is also the parental ethnic roots and denominational affiliation (no. 34 - 35). The last set of questions (no. 36 - 41) was directed to the new members (less than three years) to find out in more detail what brought them to Hilldale Lutheran Church and what made them stay or not to come back. The questionnaire of the second survey is presented in full in Appendix 1.

#### ***4.4. Subjects and Sample***

In this study one cannot talk only about subjects in the traditional empirical sense. The same people who are the subjects are also the objects. This study is about gathering and analyzing the knowledge that belongs to them. There was little trouble motivating people to answer the questionnaire. From the beginning there was a

strong sense that this study was a response to their own needs and questions. The decomposition of responses to questions about ethnicity, the building project, vision and mission, showed that this project was considered by different kinds of members to be their own. Often in ethnic research only those who have interest in ethnicity show interest to the study (Susag 1999, 55; Stoller 1996).

As said above, a decision was made to distribute the questionnaires to members and those who during this time period were affiliated with the church. The questionnaires were printed in Finnish and in English. Surveys were distributed at church and then sent to those who did not pick up their envelope at the church. For both surveys the questionnaires were available for two months. The mailing list included every person/family/household on active members roll and those homes that had contact with our church through worship services, rites of passage, Sunday School, Confirmation Classes, family ties, or just visitors who had registered themselves. Hilldale had a system called, "Who Is Who in the Pews". At the services, participants were asked to write their names and addresses on a clipboard. The Church sent them greeting cards, and the pastor visited them for discussion and with a Finnish coffee bread. The information gathered was used to send out the questionnaires in self-addressed envelopes. These envelopes with questionnaires were also available to all who visited the church during the time of survey. The survey was given to all church-based groups: choir, ladies auxiliary, seniors, bible study and youth groups; and other groups who were using the premises: Scouts, Brownies, art and music groups.

The first survey was done at the end of 1993 and at the beginning of 1994. 110 responded to the first survey, 33 in English and 77 in Finnish. The first survey had a response ratio of 73%. The second survey was done in May and June of 1998. Altogether 300 questionnaires were distributed in the second survey, 150 in Finnish and 150 in English, ca. 250 with name labels. The data used in this study was based on 202 returned questionnaires, 114 in English and 88 in Finnish. The second survey had a response ratio of 68%. If unused questionnaires in 1998 survey (15 in English and 31 in Finnish) are included the actual number of distributed questionnaires was 254. These unused questionnaires were those that were left over from those that were left to the church entrance for visitors to pick-up. That considered actual response ratio of the second survey was 80% of the questionnaires actually distributed. This new data was then compared



to the data of the first survey. As said before, it is hard to say what is the exact number of members or the affiliates because the church record keeping is very casual. The Mission Committee in charge of the survey thought that these exceptionally high numbers indicate that this group was motivated, and felt strongly about the study.

Mission Committee decided not just to send the questionnaire but leave them at the church entrance for pick-up so that everybody had a chance to be heard. This method of gathering the data was a necessity for face validity (SEE 4.5.1.). For this reason anykind of limiting of the sample was not possible. The number of active members (c.a. 320) included also people who were not able to answer because they were too young/old/sick or were out of town because of work/study/relocation or vacation.

The congregational surveys were done to be used by Church Council and Local Advisory Group/Mission Committee for the development of the strategy of the mission, the mission statement., and further development of the process. Some of the material of the first survey has been discussed in the project "Developing A Mission Statement For A Canadian Finnish Lutheran Congregation," Appendix 2.

The data was analyzed using traditional statistical methods. Frequencies were used to obtain detailed data descriptions. All variables were cross-tabulated with all variables. Correlations were measured by using bivariate and partial correlations. Some other statistical tools were also used to analyze the data. The validity of test results was measured by using chi-square tests and t-test. Data was analyzed with two programs; SPSS Release 4.0 (1994), 8.0 (1998)<sup>10</sup> and Excel 5.0 (1994), 97 (1998)<sup>11</sup>. The questionnaires of the surveys are in Appendix 1 in English and in Finnish.

The background information of the respondents (Profile of the Congregation in 1994 and 1998) is presented in chapters 7.4.1. and 7.4.2. In the first survey we used five background variables: sex, age, marital status, duration of membership and language of correspondence. In the second survey the demographic characteristics

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<sup>10</sup> Statistical Package for the Social Sciences SPSS Release 4.0 for Sun 4 (Chicago: SPSS).

<sup>11</sup> Microsoft Excel, Version 5.0 (Seattle: Microsoft Corporation, 1993).

of this sample are defined as language, gender, age, marital status, membership status, denominational affiliation, and place of residence.

The old Finnish church was situated at the core of the Finnish settlement in downtown Port Arthur. But this neighborhood has changed a lot over the years and now only a few elderly Finns live there. New families do not tend to move into downtown areas, which are coming more and more business orientated. This was one of the reasons why the congregation decided to relocate. At the time when the congregation was planning to move into the new neighborhood, demographics were studied very carefully. As Thunder Bay is an "ethnic city" with a substantial number of ethnic groups, the group was interested in getting to know the new neighborhood. Finns were found to be the largest ethnic group in this neighborhood. They outnumbered the Italians only slightly in this area. It is not surprising then that Italians also built their church on the same street. This information confirmed further the experience of the members of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church where Finns lived and helped them to make the move. This study supports the Consensus Canada statistics that 65% of residents live within 6 km of a new church. Since transportation is not usually a problem for most of the members, it is not surprising that close to 20% live farther than 10km from the church. Most of the new members, 79%, live in the neighborhood within 6-km circle from the church.

There is a substantial amount of information concerning the respondents and that information will be studied in more detail in the following chapters 7 and 8. These include ethics, their motivation for belonging to the church, their involvement, their vision, life concerns and their affiliation.

#### ***4.5. Validity and Reliability***

##### **4.5.1. Validity**

Depending on the method that was used, the project required different approaches on validity and reliability. For the empirical-analytical research part of the study, traditional measures of reliability and validity scales were used. PAR project required a different

approach because objectivity in the traditional way is not possible (Smith 1997, 182, and Rahman 1991, 14 - 15). Following is a brief description of how the validity is measured in PAR:

[A] text is valid if it is sufficiently grounded, triangulated, based on naturalistic indicators, carefully fitted to a theory (and its concepts), comprehensive in scope, credible in terms of members checks, logical, and truthful in terms of its reflection of the phenomena in question (Lincoln, and Denzin 1994, 579).

According to validity arguments by Lincoln and Denzin the text of this study can be considered valid. Using multiple methods, historical, systematic, empirical and interpretive, caused triangulation in this project. The information was also gathered from different sources through historical, systematical and empirical methods. Two basic theories, assimilation-retention and secularization, were used to conceptualize and analyze the information. The scope of this project was comprehensive, including ethnic orientation, building project and mission outreach. All information was shared and its trustworthiness has been checked thoroughly by the members, advisory group, Church Council, Canadian Missions of ELCIC, local and academic advisors.

However it is important to note that the reliability of a PAR project cannot be based on reproductivity by using the same findings or methods. Smith points out that this requirement is unnecessary (Smith 1997, 242). Patti Lather suggests that emancipatory research should address four validation methods (Lather 1991, 65-69). The methods are:

- Triangulation. This is the incorporation of multiple methods and sources of information and various theoretical schemes to cross-check information and strengthen the trustworthiness of data (see The Whitehead/Whitehead Method);
- Construct validity. This reflexivity that builds in systematic ways to critically question actions, practice and theory construct knowledge;
- Face validity. This is the return of data to the participants for analysis and interpretation to increase credibility of data.



- Catalytic validity. This is the use of "a process that reorients, focuses, and energizes participants" to take actions for transformation.

Hilldale PAR project paid strict attention to these validation methods. The project fulfills the criteria of *triangulation* as mentioned above. *Construct validity* was protected by making all decisions democratically and openly on different levels of administration; Committees, Church Council, Municipality (building permit and day-care needs assessment), Manitoba North/Western Ontario Synod Council, and Church Council of ELCIC and the Board of Directors of Church Extension Fund of ELCIC. Critical questions were raised and answered to construct validity and reliability. *Face validity* was taken seriously and all information was shared, analyzed and interpreted with group members, committees, council and advisors. *Catalytic validity* can be clearly seen in the action that was taken by the members of Hilldale Lutheran Church. All this passionate involvement was abstracted, coded and rationally systemized in "Planning Strategies for an Ethnic-Finnish Lutheran Congregation in Transition to a Canadian Lutheran Congregation" (Glad 1995) and in this second study.

The data that was collected through these surveys can be considered valid for the purpose that they were intended, to help develop the mission statement, to help plan the strategy for the mission, and further development of the process. The data was presented to the congregation to further validate and to confirm the information gathered through the surveys. The second survey session provided the respondents the opportunity to comment on the questionnaire. The Mission Committee which conducted the survey was satisfied, as well as the congregation which had the opportunity to check the validity of the questionnaire and the way the data was analyzed as a valid description of the opinions of the congregation.

On PAR project the centrality of value is in the peoples' work. Critical knowledge validates itself in creating a movement of transformation and overcoming obstacles. At the beginning, the group decided on certain principles, assumptions, and expectations and throughout their work they expanded their understanding. This required flexibility and courage to cross boundaries. "Their work has validity because it is real - it happened" (Smith 1997, 246). Validity can also be assessed by the value the participants placed on their work. The members of Hilldale are proud of what they had accomplished.



Peter Reason mentions two related limitations that can affect participatory research: "Unaware projection", which means that we project our own or group anxieties onto the world unconsciously. "Consensus collusion" - defends their anxieties ignoring or not properly exploring the challenges (Reason 1994, 327). By using growth centered strategies, people can more easily acknowledge their anxieties and reduce the effects of projection or collusion. Furthermore, it is helpful to try to be more sensitive to emotions. Because of these limitations, it is also important to maintain a regular cycle of action - reflection.

#### **4.5.2. Reliability**

The survey was done among those who had a connection to the church. These included: active and non-active members and their families including married children and their families, visitors, those who had been baptized, confirmed or married, and parents of Sunday School children. The sample of responses can be considered reliable for the purpose of this study and represents the study group. However, one has to remember that both studies were done with the whole group and not with random samples of the group. The choice was made because of the study group being quite small and taking a random sample out of it would have made the sample even smaller. Also, taking a random sample would have been against the democracy principle which is crucial for the PAR. Democratic principle made it necessary to give everybody a chance to be heard in matters that were important to everybody. Furthermore, holistic approach and undefined group that was changing all the time made it impossible to use traditional follow-up survey. The question is, how well does this data represent the whole group? The data was substantiated at face value and returned to the church council, mission committee and congregational meetings. In all those meetings the data was considered reliable and representing the group. Furthermore, the age distribution of the data represents the age distribution of the congregation. The responses on certain questions are very close to the Canadian national average and so speaks in favor of reliability of the survey.



Out of the 150 questionnaires distributed in the first survey, 110 forms (73%) were returned; and in the second survey, 204 questionnaires out of 300 (68%) were returned. These return rates form a reliable base for statistical analysis and can be seen as a result of the participants' feeling that they were not just objects of the study but the real subjects. The Mission Committee concluded that this kind of a controlled distribution and follow-up is a definite reason for such high numbers.

The returned responses (called sample in the text) represent about 46% of the active membership in 1994, and 63% in the 1998 study, so the information can be considered very reliable (Carroll, Dudley & McKinney 1992, 171, 172). The sample also compares well to the national studies done in Canada. This data describes only The Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thunder Bay as in the 1994 study, only 14 out of the 110 respondents were not our members, and in the 1998 study, 33 out of the 204 responses were from non-members. The result of this survey should cautiously be applied to describe any other Finnish ethnic congregation in Canada.





#### **4.6. The Phases of PAR at Hilldale**

The PAR project at Hilldale was done in three phases:

1. Preliminary, trust building etc.

1984 - 1988

- During these years the trust was built between the researcher and the group.
- First meetings with the Lutheran Church in America Division for Canadian Mission about the possible mission (construct validity) were held
- The seeds of the new vision were sown.

2. Planning and strategy building

1991 - 1995

- Penetrating questions were raised again: "What is going to happen to our church?" (construct validity)
- New meetings with Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada - Canadian Mission were started (construct validity).
- Mission committee was established (construct validity).
- Researcher entered the Doctor of Ministry program at Minneapolis (construct validity).
- Whitehead/Whitehead method was applied and information was gathered from three sources (triangulation).



- First survey was done, analyzed and shared (face validity).
- Information from all three sources was presented to Church Council, Mission Committee and the congregation for discussion (triangulation)
- Mission statement was adopted.
- Decision was made to sell the old church, move into a new neighborhood, build a new church and call a second pastor for the mission (catalytic validity).
- The name of the congregation was changed from "Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thunder Bay" to "Hilldale Lutheran Church" (catalytic validity).
- Theses "Planning Strategies for an Ethnic-Finnish Lutheran Congregation in transition to a Canadian Lutheran Congregation" was written and adopted (triangulation and face validity).
- Land was bought and architect was hired (catalytic validity).
- Mission Pastor was called (catalytic validity).
- Mission started (catalytic validity).

### 3. Action, mission and building project

1995 - 1999

- Congregation sold the old church and started to worship in another church (catalytic validity).
- Ground breaking for the new church (catalytic validity) was done.



- Construction started (catalytic validity).
- Door-to-door mission work started (catalytic validity).
- Moved into the new church building. (catalytic validity)
- Day-care needs assessment was done (triangulation).
- Dedication of the new building (catalytic validity) took place.
- Finishing of the church building continued (catalytic validity).
- Every home in the neighborhood was visited (catalytic validity).
- Second survey, analyzing the data and sharing (triangulation, construct validity and face validity) was done.
- Developed new plans for the future (face validity).
- Building project of the condominiums was started (ground breaking was in 2000) (catalytic validity).

Series of studies:

1. Survey, 1994
2. Day-Care Needs Assessment, 1996
3. Survey, 1998



## 5. A TRADITIONAL PERSPECTIVE

The role of the researcher in this project was to prepare the material of historic and tradition perspectives to be studied in the congregation. This information, according to The Whitehead/Whitehead Method was shared with the members of the congregation at the time when we were developing the strategy. This material was studied during 1994 at the Church Council, Local Advisory Group/Mission Committee and in several small groups to help to understand the tradition historic context of the congregation.

This historic study inspired vivid conversation about the history of immigration to Thunder Bay. The members shared their stories about the reasons that made them leave Finland and what they were looking for in the new homeland. Many of them came just for a couple of years but then decided to stay. The group shared quite openly also the difficulties they had to face after immigrating to Canada. For most it was not easy to settle in Port Arthur, as the city was formerly known. However most were happy that they immigrated and were especially hopeful for the future their siblings would have in Canada.

### *5.1. A Historic Perspective*

It has been suggested that when humans are forced to move and change, they prefer to forget their past. They actually prefer to diminish their being, their wholeness, in the face of the painful process of remembering the past. Then again, history is very much what we are. This is the process of assimilation and retention through which all immigrants and their siblings have to go through. Change usually means pain and the congregation already felt some of that pain. Then again, the change was to come anyway and Hilddale Lutheran Church tried to prepare for it so that we could manage it. This chapter



represents a rehearsal of the past history, some of it painful, but the greater part of it will bring deep pleasure and satisfaction. “We reflect on the past not just for the past’s own sake; rather, we look upon it as a compass - and who would use a compass only to ascertain from where he or she has come?”(Bosch 1993, 189).

One of the key elements in the Hilldale Lutheran Church's transition process was that the congregation wanted to be faithful both to the history and to the future. The historical perspective was important for the mission of the congregation and its identity. The purpose of this study, however, is not simply to rewrite the history of the Finnish immigrants in Canada or in North America. The church wanted to move into the future and learn from the history what would be helpful in this process.

### **5.1.1. The Finnish Immigrants in Canada**

Thunder Bay (formerly Fort William and Port Arthur) is among the earliest and the largest of the Finnish settlements in Canada. Immigration to Thunder Bay started as early as 1870's. After World War I, the United States restricted immigrant quotas and the migration of Finns into Canada increased because they could not get into USA (Wargelin 1972, 130-131).

“We came to America, like many others from our village, expecting to carve gold with wooden knives.” This metaphor for immigration was most often given by Finnish immigrants interviewed by researchers for the Multicultural History Society.<sup>12</sup>

These numbers in Table 5.1.1.-1. reflect quite well the economic and political situation in Finland. The times of the wars as well as the times for economic booms and recessions in Finland can

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<sup>12</sup> These interviews are now part of the Society's oral history collection on Finnish Canadians quoted in Varpu Lindström-Best, “Finns in Canada”; in Robert F. Harney, ed., Polyphony: The Bulletin of the Multicultural History Society of Ontario (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1981), 3.

easily be seen. People immigrated more often during recession and after a war.

In addition to the economic reasons mentioned above, the emigration was also shaped by the transition of the Finnish society from an agricultural to an industrial society, the dramatic shift from rural farm to urban non-farm society. Emigration was a transitional phenomenon in this transformation. A rapid increase in population was also a major cause of emigration (Kero 1974, 56).

The Finns who made up the second big wave of immigration, which is the majority of the members of Hilldale Lutheran Church est.1950, to Canada in the 1950's had basically the same reasons as the immigrants before. Economic reasons were again a priority. This time immigration was more an individual decision, not as collective village by village type of move, unlike the earlier emigration wave and settlement in Canada. (Sillanpää 1976, 41-46).

It has been estimated that about 71,000 moved from Finland to Canada and that ca. 100,000 Finns live in Canada at present (Kirkon ulkосуomalaisyön raportti 1994, 9). As late as 1931, 88.3 per cent of the Finns in Canada declared that they were Lutherans but only 3% claimed to be members of any church in Canada.<sup>13</sup> After that, the number of Finnish immigrants belonging to church has increased a little. A few congregations (Thunder Bay, Timmins, South Porcupine and Kirkland Lake) have been established in Northwestern Ontario and one in British Columbia (Vancouver). In Finland 86.7% belong to the ELCF<sup>14</sup> as of 31.12.1992 (Suomen evankelis-luterilainen kirkko vuosina 1992 - 1995).

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<sup>13</sup> Seventh Census of Canada, 1931 IV, table III: "Racial origin of the Population Showing First, Second, Third and Fourth Largest Percentage of Country of Birth, Religion, Mother Tongue and Race with which Males Tend to Intermarry," pp. 238-39, in *Defiant Sisters* by Varpu Lindstrom-Best, 115; and Markku Suokonautio, "Reorganization of the Finnish Lutherans in Canada," *Polyphony* 3, no. 2 (Fall 1981): 93.

<sup>14</sup> ELCF, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland.



Table 5.1.1. - 1.(Saarinen 1981, 17).Immigration to Canada of People of Finnish Origin or Birth, 1900-77<sup>1</sup>

Year	Number	Year	Number	Year	Number
1900 - 01	682	1926	4,811 <sup>3</sup>	1952	2,308
1901 - 02	1,292	1927	5,167	1953	1,252
1902 - 03	1,734	1928	3,758	1954	717
1903 - 04	845	1929	4,712	1955	652
1904 - 05	1,323	1930	2,811	1956	1,128
1905 - 06	1,103	1931	136	1957	2,884
1906 - 07	1,049	1932	62	1958	1,296
1907 - 08	1,212	1933	67	1959	954
1908	453 <sup>2</sup>	1934	79	1960	1,047
1909	1,348	1935	64	1961	381
1910	2,262	1936	61	1962	385
1911	1,637	1937	94	1963	325
1912	2,135	1938	81	1964	476
1913	3,508	1939	82	1965	656
1914	637	1940	32	1966	696
1915	91	1941	20	1967	942 <sup>4</sup>
1916	276	1942	21	1968	819
1917	129	1943	18	1969	772
1918	15	1944	8	1970	694
1919	25	1945	26	1971	452
1920	1,198	1946	56	1972	311
1921	460	1947	81	1973	365
1922	654	1948	227	1974	362
1923	6,019	1949	267	1975	308
1924	6,123	1950	504	1976	266
1925	1,561	1951	4,158	1977	187

<sup>1</sup> Figures prior to 1918 are not statistically accurate as many of the Finnish Immigrants were classified as either Swedish or Russian.

<sup>2</sup> Statistics for the period 1900 - 08 are from one March 31 to the next. Since 1908 the figures apply for the calendar year; thus, the figures for the year 1907 - 08 and the first three months of 1908 overlap.

<sup>3</sup> Figures prior to 1926 do not include immigrants from the United States.

<sup>4</sup> The figures after 1966 refer to Finnish immigrants by country of birth rather than by origin. Source: Government of Canada, Statistics Canada Year Books (1939 - 68); Government of Canada, Employment and Immigration Canada, Immigration Statistics 1969 - 1977; and written information provided by Employment and Immigration Canada.

From the viewpoint of the Finnish Lutheran congregations and their mission, it is very significant that the amount of Finnish emigration from Finland has diminished radically, being now only about 30 annually. The amount of migration from Finland has been declining because of the economic boom in Finland and because Canada has changed its immigration rules so that it is more difficult to immigrate to Canada from Finland than it was before. At the moment it looks like one can not expect any big change in the near future and, because of this, the mission of an immigrant congregation is challenged to change.

### **5.1.2. A Brief History of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thunder Bay**

Thunder Bay's first Finnish Lutheran congregation was Bethel, established in 1897. Bethel belonged to the Finnish Evangelical-Lutheran National Church in America, which was close to one of the Revival Movements in Finland, the Evangelicals. The National Church did not tolerate the national Church of Finland (Mattila 1965, 6-13). They accused Suomi Synod, which tried to be like the church in Finland, of doctrinal confusion and laxity, particularly in the doctrines of justification and sanctification (Kukkonen 1972, 110-111). Bethel became part of the Missouri Synod in 1963 together with the other National Church congregations in Canada and USA. A small group of people decided to establish a new congregation mainly because Bethel Lutheran Church did not allow the pastors from Finland to visit the congregation. Formed in 1950, the new congregation was called Independent Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church. In 1982 it joined the Lutheran Church in America. The congregation had earlier promised to do so if Bishop E.G. Gulin from Finland would bless the dwelling of the congregation (Mattila 1965, 49-50).

The original purpose of the Independent Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church was to establish a congregation that was similar to the ones back in Finland. Yet it was also understood that now the immigrants were living in a new country. In Thunder Bay many of the older people never learned to speak English and the younger could not speak Finnish. As early as 1951 there are records expressing concern





about the lack of knowledge of Finnish among younger generations. Sunday School teachers had a hard time trying to communicate with children who could not understand Finnish (Mattila 1965, 30).

The Independent Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church started with small Bible Study group. This small group, mainly members of the Bethel Lutheran Church, got together in homes before an old Swedish Baptist church was purchased by the Independent Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church. Some from the small Bible Study group transferred their membership to this new Finnish congregation. Worship services were only in Finnish, conducted according to the Finnish Lutheran Book of Worship (Kirkkokäsikirja). It was important for the new immigrants that their church would be as much as possible like the one that they were used to in Finland. The first occasional English services were conducted in the early 1980's.

Thunder Bay has been considered the largest settlement of Finnish immigrants outside of Scandinavia. The estimates vary between 10,000 -15,000 depending on who is considered to be Finnish. The role of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church has been to serve the whole Finnish community, especially those who do not belong to any congregation in Thunder Bay. The Finnish Lutheran Church has been very strong in its Finnish ministry. During the last 44 years of ministry about 1200 have been baptized, over 1200 have been confirmed and 50-70 buried annually. The active roll of members is about 320 and non-active roll is over 2000.<sup>15</sup> These numbers can be understood against the background of the folk church tradition in Finland where about 85% belong to the Lutheran Church. What was said before in general about the immigrants' affiliation with Lutheran church is also true in Thunder Bay. When they came to Canada most of them did not join any congregation but still considered themselves Lutherans and used the church to provide the services.

The Independent Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church has tried to stay in close contact with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland (ELCF). Many of the members of the new congregation belonged to some of the five revival movements in Finland.<sup>16</sup> Finland's

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<sup>15</sup> The Parish Registry of The Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thunder Bay 1950 - 1993 and Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thunder Bay - Annual Congregational Reports to ELCIC, 1991 - 1993.

<sup>16</sup> The five revival movements of Finland: The Awakened, which had a resurgence under Paavo Ruotsalainen (1777-1852), The Laestadians, which had a resurgence under Lauri



revival movements, even though they differ considerably, have one important thing in common: they have never broken away from the ranks of the Lutheran Church, but have worked to influence it and impose their mark from within, against the background of their full power of protest. In this respect, the ELCF differs from many of its sister churches in other parts of the world (Ruokanen n.d., 16).

Due to their strong Finnish identity and the need for Finnish language ministry, all of the pastors have been called from Finland except for one who was called in 1988 from Canada. Usually pastors who came to serve the Independent Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church<sup>17</sup> took only two years leave of absence from their office in Finland so that they were able to return. This practice naturally kept the ties to the Lutheran Church in Finland fresh and strong but also meant that the congregation lacked long-term planning. Usually it meant that the English ministry was neglected. Pastors arriving to serve the congregation at regular intervals emphasized the retention of Finnish culture and language. From the point of view of the English ministry, long-term planning, as well as the assimilation process of the immigrants, short-term callings did not provide the continuity and support that would have been needed.

David T. Halkola writes about this difficulty in bilingual congregations:

Immigrant pastors amplified the problem because many of them were unable or unwilling to master the English language. Alarming numbers of younger people drifted away from a church they deemed to be determined to preserve a way of life distasteful to them. Often it became a wedge between immigrant parents and native born children, a notable generation gap. Controversies arose within congregations and raged on the national level of the Suomi-Synod about Synodical polity or the role of Suomi College and

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Leevi Laestadius (1800-1861), *The Evangelicals*, which had a resurgence under Fredrik Gabriel Hedberg (1811-1893), *The Supplications* (also known as "The Prayers Movement," in *The Faith of The Finns*, ed. By Ralph J. Jalkanen), which had a resurgence under Henrik Renquist (1789-1866) and *The Fifth Revival*, which had a resurgence under Urho Rafael Muroma (1890-1966); and Uriel Kailo, *Kirkkomme Tienviittäjät* (Helsinki: Agricola-Seura, 1952), passim; and Lasse Reijomaa, ed., *Ehjä Sirpale, Kappale suomalaisen herätyskristillisyyden arkea ja juhlaa* (Kauniainen: Ev.lut. Sisälähetysseura, 1973), 6. (These resources were used in Thunder Bay as best readily available).

<sup>17</sup> The name of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thunder Bay before joining the LCA in 1982 was Independent Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church. The congregation adopted the new name, Hilldale Lutheran Church in 1994 but used the old name simultaneously with new name until the congregation moved in to the new building in 1996.



Theological Seminary. These had a sharply debilitating effect upon the efficacy of the institution involved (Halkola 1972, 276).

It has also been the policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland that pastors are only sent on a basis of term calls and after the call return back to Finland. The median length of a term in Thunder Bay has been two years and three months (Koiranen 1990, 4-10). This practice has been in contrast to the basic principle that the objective of the Church Center for Foreign Affairs of ELCF was to help the Finnish immigrants to integrate into the local church and congregational life (Piispainkokouksen asettaman ulkosuomalaistyöryhmän mietintö 1979, 34-35).

If the pastor himself is not planning to stay and to integrate, it is difficult to provide the leadership required to accomplish the task of integration. In addition, Finnish immigrant congregations in Canada have not been eager to call Finnish speaking pastors who have graduated from Canadian or American seminaries, and vice versa, the bilingual pastors may not have been too eager to seek a call from bilingual congregations. Whatever the reasons have been, the fact is that most of the bilingual pastors are serving English speaking congregations. Presently, it seems that most of the bilingual congregations have pastors who have stayed, and will probably stay, in their present congregations. This will allow long term planning and integration. In the past, however, it seems that especially three factors in personnel politics have effected the nondevelopment of English ministry. Those factors are short-term calls, the fact that pastors were called from Finland and that their readiness to use English has not been in balance with the challenge.

The regional secretary for the Board of American Missions, LCA<sup>18</sup> and the last president of the former Suomi-Synod, Raymond W. Wargelin, criticized the Canadian Lutheran congregations for not fully recognizing their mission among immigrants:

Furthermore, too few of the Finnish congregations fully understood their role in this respect, namely, to aid the immigrants in their adjustment to new circumstances. It is no wonder therefore that a young immigrant, whose life philosophy and character had not

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<sup>18</sup> LCA, Lutheran Church in America.

matured as yet, was unable to make sufficient adjustments. Many fell prey to despair, to alcoholism, and poverty. It is remarkable that much of this same observation is repeated forty years later by Pastor Antti Lepisto, presently employed by the Board of American Missions of the Lutheran Church in America in inner mission work among scattered Finnish communities in western Canada (Wargelin 1972, 132).

The latest strategy for years 1994-2000, set by the Church Center for Foreign Affairs of ELCF, is emphasizing the integration and the responsibility of local church bodies even more strongly than the official policy written in 1980. The objective is to help immigrants to integrate to the culture and society of their new homeland. ELCF understands integration as getting used to new circumstances where everybody has the right to retain one's own heritage that relates to his/her religious identity (Kirkon ulkосуomalaisyön keskus 1994, 2-6).

The history of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thunder Bay is quite typical to Finnish immigrant congregations in Canada. When there were a lot of immigrants coming, the ministry was booming. The congregation was a "bridge" to Finland and retained the traditions from ELCF. For historical reasons, personnel politics and language politics, the orientation of integration had been towards Finland. Only during the last ten years the orientation of integration has been changing toward Canada.

### **5.1.3. The History of the Mission of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thunder Bay**

The survival of the congregation has been a genuine concern of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thunder Bay. What will happen after the first generation immigrants? The very process that they are currently going through at Hilldale Lutheran Church<sup>17</sup> started in 1987, when the congregation had their first meeting with three other congregations, Zion, Our Savior and Immanuel, and with the representatives of the national church.<sup>19</sup> At that meeting, we discussed

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<sup>19</sup> The representatives from ELCIC: Rev. James Chell, Executive Director for Canadian Missions, ELCIC, Rev. Alfred B. Sanders, Consultant for the Division for Canadian



the possibility of starting a new mission together with any of the congregations.<sup>20</sup> The Canada Board of American Missions of the Lutheran Church in America (LCA)<sup>18</sup> had purchased a piece of property from a future new subdivision on Hilldale Road earlier in the same year. Behind the interest of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church was the genuine concern for the future of the congregation. The plan was to merge two congregations, one of the Lutheran churches that was supposed to be the seed of the English speaking part of the congregation and the Finnish Lutheran Church that was supposed to be the Finnish speaking part of the congregation. After a couple of meetings, it became clear that none of them at the time was interested in proceeding with the plan but would rather continue as before. In 1991 Finnish Lutheran Church re-started the negotiations about the relocation and mission with Division for Canadian Mission, ELCIC.

Whereas the Finnish ministry of the Hilldale Lutheran Church has been strong, that has not been the case with the English ministry. Regular English services started in 1988 when the first pastor graduated in Canada was called. After six years of regular English services the average attendance in the English worship service was 22 compared to 127 in the Finnish service. Still an average of 20 was confirmed each year and over 20 were baptized, naturally as a part of the English Ministry.<sup>21</sup> The congregation was still carrying the folk church tradition and was willing to serve everybody but had not been very successful in its English ministry. At that time the future looked like this: If a transition to English ministry does not happen within the next 10-15 years, it could be the end of the ministry of the Hilldale Lutheran Church. Since this congregation was the only connection to the church for many of those who have been baptized, confirmed, married, etc. here, the closing of the congregation would have meant that they would have lost their important connection to the church. This realization was the beginning of our process for envisioning our mission.

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Mission, Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario Synod and Dr. Brian Lorch, member of the board for the Division for Canadian Missions.

<sup>20</sup> Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thunder Bay, Church Council, Book of Minutes (October 1985 - June 1990, Meeting on Nov. 11.1987 at Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church, 74-76.

<sup>21</sup> Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thunder Bay - Annual Congregational Reports to ELCIC, 1991 - 1993.



Years ago the same concern was brought to the surface by a survey conducted by the LCA<sup>18</sup> at St. Timothy Lutheran Church, Copper Cliff, as a part of a national survey in 1971. According to the survey, there were only a few members who were still in the work force, plus a few youths and many seniors. Because of that, there was a fear that the congregation would gradually diminish (Raivio 1975, 360-361). In his book about the history of Finns in Michigan, Armas K. E. Holmio lists 65 Suomi-Synod congregations established in Michigan between 1890 and 1953. Twenty have been discontinued, a loss of over 30%. Without knowing the specific reasons for the closures, it is impossible to draw any conclusions regarding these closures. The statistics that are available don't provide the needed information. Without deliberate study and action, there is a serious reason to be concerned that the Finnish Lutheran congregations in Canada could repeat the Finnish experience in Michigan. Most of the Finnish congregations in Canada are struggling with their English ministry while some have already admitted that they will continue only as long as financial resources last.

The majority of members of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church are part of the second wave of immigrants that came after World War II. The congregation was entering the time of transition from the first generation immigrants to the second generation.

As table 5.2. shows, the average age in the congregation was close to 50. Among the Finnish speaking, the average age was well over 60 but it was under 30 among the English speaking. Almost 30% of those who speak English were under 20 years of age. It was also important to notice that none of the under 20 age group answered the congregational survey in Finnish. Out of those who still answered in Finnish, 35% were under the age of 50. These statistics indicate that we were entering the time in our transition process where the number of Finnish speaking members started to decline and more and more would be English speaking if the process continued as a linear curve.



Table 5.1.3. -1.: The Language Distribution of the Members of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thunder Bay Age Categories, 1994.<sup>22</sup> (In %'s)

Age	0 – 19	20 -29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59	60 - 69	70+
<b>Finnish</b>	0	3	4	13	6	22	20
<b>English</b>	12	6	8	5	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	12	9	12	18	6	22	21

Simultaneously with the deep concern that those who had been baptized and confirmed were not attending the church services, the congregation also became aware of the limits of our present location. Our church was at that time located downtown where the Finnish immigrants used to live. At the beginning of 1990's, only a few seniors lived in the downtown area and most of the houses were getting old and did not attract young families. The neighborhood was not getting any better and in the future might be used mainly by businesses.

Those families who brought their children to Sunday School did not live in the area but in the new subdivisions on the other side of the expressway. Our church had no parking of its own so at the time we were using the nearby streets and the Italian Hall parking lot. Parking was a major concern because most of our members drove from new subdivisions. At that time there was no land available near the church and, if there were, it would have been quite expensive to buy. We did a feasibility study on how much it would cost to expand and renovate our church. We came to the conclusion that it would be much more costly to expand at our old location than it would be to build a new church in one of the new subdivisions.

It is crucial for a congregation to re-evaluate its mission. Every congregation *is* its history and so is every individual. The systems theory gives new insight into the meaning of the history and the identity of a congregation. The history of a congregation includes the history of the denomination at large, the history of its members, as well as the history of the community it serves (Friedman 1985). When the

<sup>22</sup> The data in this table is from the congregational survey in 1994.

congregation was re-evaluating their mission, they looked to the future in the light of their past. This was the part of their mission in which they tried to be faithful to their history and to conform their future with their past and present.

Even though the immigrants came to find a better place to live and earn a living, one of the first things that the immigrants did together was to establish congregations and build churches. The congregations have served as “safe islands” in the midst of the hostile world. At the beginning, it was very important that the immigrants had a place to go where they could share their experience. Besides their religious functions, Finnish congregations have also served as bridges to the old country (Holmio 1967, 297).

Finnish Lutheran congregations have a specific mission of their own among the Canadian Lutheran congregations. Their special interest in ministry was the Finns, people who through their history relate to the Finnish Lutheran Church, be it through their baptism back in Finland, their mother tongue or their reawakened interest in their Finnish roots. One could ask if the mission of these Finnish heritage congregations is to pursue Finnish culture or to pursue assimilation to Canadian culture as soon as possible. Different congregations have unique approaches to this challenge of congregational life.

There are many reasons why the timing and rhythm of the transition to English as a language and as a dominant culture is different in the USA and Canada and also different from one community to the next. Broadly speaking, it can be said that official cultural politics play an important role. One major example is the American melting pot and the Canadian mosaic. When the church enters either the melting pot or the mosaic, it is also crucial to determine the shape and role of the church at that point in time. Does the church at large have a vision and are its congregations growing or declining? All of this does influence individual congregations and is especially important for congregations in transition.

Different ethnic groups have different patterns for coping with the dominant culture. Assimilation and retention are also a religious phenomenon. It is important to understand that there is no such thing as “a well-traveled way of North-Americanization or Canadianization.” For example, because immigration started earlier in USA, the transition to English has for the most part already taken place. But it is





much too simplistic to say that the processes in USA and Canada would be even nearly similar. It is more accurate to assume that every congregation has to find its own way through it with the help of similar experiences learned from other congregations.

#### **5.1.4. The Language Problem in Historical Perspective**

David T. Halkola has studied the language problem within the Suomi-Synod. He quotes Nils Hasselmo to capture the deep sense of language as the common denominator of the Finns and Finnish culture:

The mother tongue is much more than a means of communication. It is a means of group identification, the symbol of the cultural unity and uniqueness of people, the very manifestation of the spirit of a nation. The language represents history and traditions, home, parents, and childhood, religious and aesthetic ideals. It is a reminder of the homeland to the exile. It is a faithful friend in lonely moments, a travel companion and an escape ... It is the symbol of unity and joins the people scattered over the new continent. To preserve the mother tongue and keep it 'pure' becomes a moral duty (Hasselmo 1963, 121-122).

Language is an important part of the ministry of an ethnic congregation. It is therefore no wonder that Finnish ethnic congregations take good care of their Finnish language ministry. Because of the importance of one's mother tongue, many older members are concerned about the future of Finnish language ministry. Language is also an important part of one's religious memory and ethnic identity and how it is passed on to the next generation.

Halkola divides the history of Finnish immigrants into three periods: The Formative Years - to 1900, A Developing Concern 1900 - 1921 and The Period of Controversy 1921 - 1962. During the Formative Years the language problem seemed quite insignificant. The early immigrants faced the task of adjusting, being a "stranger in a strange land." If the early immigrant did not restrict himself to an ethnic community where the English language could be ignored



completely, the immigrant adapted by means of an interpreter or by the painful process of learning a necessary minimum of English. The greater implications of Americanization as well as the whole matter of language lacked relevance. At that period of time, the mission of the church (Suomi-Synod and its congregations) seemed to be quite clearly to minister to the needs of the Finnish immigrants (Halkola 1972, 276-277).

At the time (1900 - 1921) when the children of the first immigrants entered the school system a conflict developed. It was not automatically assured that Finnish language and culture would be retained. The hopes were still high for continued dissemination of the Finnish language. There was no more alleviation of the growing problem of Americanization. Some were overly anxious to imitate Americans and to seek their friends among non-Finns. On the other hand, some were horrified to report that confirmation instruction was now to be made available in both Finnish and English. It was understood that younger people could not be reached unless the church adapted to their needs. One solution would be to stress the role of the home environment in keeping the culture and language alive. Some even believed that vacation school would be the answer to retention (Ibid., 277-279).

However, the problem was not diminishing but became more controversial. The “language question” became more like the “language controversy”, a serious issue. After the 1930's it became more a congregational issue. It seemed clear that there was but one outcome - a gradual transition from the use of Finnish to the use of English as the major language within the church. Halkola makes the important point that the language question at this period of time was also touched by two factors that were much beyond any control of the immigrants, namely independence and immigration restrictions. Both created mixed feelings as well as altering the church's contacts with the church of Finland. The church of Finland in its attempt to be helpful, “underscored the changing conditions between the church of one's childhood and the church in a new setting.” Halkola comments that this was the time when “the trend toward Americanization becomes clearly visible” (Ibid., 279-281).

During the years 1921 to 1962 two opinions polarized - one to preserve Finnish as long as possible, the other to move as rapidly as possible to the use of English. The congregations had entered the time



of transition that resulted at the congregational level in a sort of “lost generation” where numbers of younger people left the “Finn church” to join other congregations. That can be seen in the fact that few congregations grew in membership during the 1920's and 1930's. It is furthermore remarkable to notice that the leadership either resisted change or refused to acknowledge that any particular problem existed. In this period congregations also found it hard to find bilingual pastors (Ibid., 283-284).

Halkola concluded that after 1963, there seemed to be very few signs that any language problem still existed. He also observed that the process of assimilation was nearing completion. “Perhaps we have exaggerated the concept of cultural assimilation, we have concluded that lessened resistance has become acceptance of some inevitable process to eradicate differences. Might we not instead realize that for some this can never occur” (Ibid., 285).

It is very common that immigrant siblings forget their ethnic language, but it does not happen without pain. Oscar Handlin concluded his study on the theme of “the shock of alienation”:

The old folk knew then they would not come to belong, not through their own experience nor through their off-spring. The only adjustment they had been able to make to life in the United States had been one that involved the separateness of their group, one that increased their awareness of the differences between themselves and the rest of the society. In that adjustment they had always suffered from the consciousness they were strangers. The demand that they assimilate, that they surrender their separateness, condemned them always to be outsiders. In practice, the free structure of American life permitted them with few restraints to go their own way, but under the shadow of a consciousness that they would never belong. They had thus completed their alienation from the culture to which they had come, as from that which they had left (Handlin 1951, 285).

In many ways, the story in Canada is very much similar or even identical. But the assimilation process itself is different because of the different timing in history and because of the affecting factors which are also different in Canada than in the USA. The historical events that influenced the assimilation process significantly are the immigration restrictions that were in place in the United States as early as 1921 and



directed immigration to Canada. Equally important was the frequent inclusion of Finland as one of the more preferred sources of immigrants by the government of Canada. Canada eventually adopted a more universal immigration policy. That this policy combined with the increased domestic prosperity in Finland after the end of the 1950's, brought about a gradual decline in the number of immigrants (Green 1976, 20). These historic facts help us to understand why it seems that most of the Finnish Lutheran congregations are presently in phase two and three. In the terms used by Halkola, the present is the time of developing concern and the time of controversy. Since immigration started later and continued longer in Canada than in the USA, the transition process even in congregations established at the end of 1800's and at the beginning of 1900's has been delayed.

## ***5.2. A Tradition Historic Perspective***

The congregation of Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thunder Bay, was challenged by the new environment to which they had migrated. Since this phenomena of cultural transaction is so common in the history of the Christian church, it was necessary to study what can be learned from this experience which could help the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church to go through its own transition. David J. Bosch quotes Niebuhr about the importance of history of our tradition as a guide to the future:

Like the Israelites of old - who needed to remind themselves, in every period of crises, of their deliverance from Egypt, their wanderings in the desert, and their ancient covenant with God - we too need to be reminded of our roots, not only in order that we might have consolation but even more that we might find direction (Niebuhr in Bosch 1959, 189).

In this section on the historical overview of the tradition of cultural interaction, I want to examine how cultural barriers have been crossed in biblical history and in the history of the Christian church. First, I want to take a missiological view on the history of the Christian



church. Missionaries have been on the cultural barriers from the beginning and have a lot of experience on how to cross them. The idea was that the insights of missiologists who have studied the interaction of religion and culture could be helpful in the work with a congregation undergoing a religious and cultural transition. This information, according to The Whitehead/Whitehead Method, was shared with the congregation at the time when they were developing the strategy. This material was studied at the Church Council, Local Advisory Group/Mission Committee and in several small groups to help to understand the tradition historic context of the congregation.

### **5.2.1. The Christian Tradition from Missiological Perspective**

Even though the Bible tells the story of one nation, Israel, as God's chosen people, it does not mean that God was not active elsewhere. Other cultures parallel the history of Israel in its development from generation to generation. In this section we try to see "God within" (Niebuhr 1959, *passim*; and Kraft 1990, 103-116) culture and how it stimulates change. The radical pluralism that we are about to study is basically a theological issue, yet, because it generates acute tension at the level of culture, its historical implications are obvious. It is crucial that each new generation and culture experience the process of producing in its own cultural forms as an appropriate vehicle for the transmission of its mission. We as the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church are in dialogue with a multitude of cultures found in the Canadian Mosaic, following a version of the faith expressive of our own cultural heritage and challenged by our environment.

It is somewhat surprising that when one starts to read the Bible through the glasses of "cultural interest" to see how full it is of stories of people in cultural transition and what it means to be the people of God within culture. The story for Israel starts with a fair-sized family group (Gen. 12:5) moving from one part of the Middle East (Haran) to another (Canaan). This family lived according to its familiar Semitic and nomadic customs. Due to Abraham's new relationship with God, the family began to modify certain aspects of its culture, separating



itself in many respects from its larger culture and becoming an entity unto itself.

In its new surrounding, Abraham's tribe had more freedom to modify its culture than heretofore. The tribe changed until it became twelve tribes, a nomadic people again under Moses, a conquering people under Joshua, a rather unsettled people under judges, a unified theocracy under Samuel, and a kingdom under Saul. In all of these cases, we can see God and his people working together in terms of the changing culture. Sometimes changes were needed or wanted, be it change in lifestyle or religious patterns. At the time of the New Testament, we become aware of a number of additional adaptations such as the synagogue, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the monastic Essenes, and the Zealots. It seems that there are two sides, God's act and a "response to a cultural felt need on the part of the people of God" (Kraft 1990, 315-316). The co-occurrence of human culture and the acts of God can be seen throughout the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Such adaptation to and of culture has continued as recorded in the New Testament and in church history. It is the thesis of Lamin Sanneh that "Christianity, from its origins, identified itself with the need to translate out of Aramaic and Hebrew, ... to relativize its Judaic roots ... to destigmatize Gentile culture" (Sanneh 1993, 1). The Church, according to its nature, is always in a process of translating its message to its surrounding community.

The first cultural frontier in the New-Testament era was the Jewish-Gentile frontier at large, meaning quite often the Greco-Roman culture. During the first century of Christian history through the new Christian proclamation, Jew and Gentile became interchangeable - a process that at the same time revitalized the one as much as it destigmatized the other. The beginning of this infusion of new information was Christ, the new stimulus into the human scene. In many ways this new infusion made some aspects of the previous system obsolete, some aspects were very similar and some were different. During the first century, the Christians continued this process of cultural transformation in the setting of first-century Hebrew culture which was more and more culturally heterogeneous. It may be assumed that the Jerusalem church, for example, still required circumcision and that its members would not eat pork. Cultural transformation at that time, like many times after that, was not just a



one-way street but it had its effects on all cultures involved in the process (Ibid., 4-10).

One has to admit that only a few were able to hear the full cross-cultural implications of the Master's preaching. For many his teaching remained in continuity with the Judaic Heritage. E.P. Sanders believes that Jesus was a prophet preaching the reassembling of the twelve tribes of Israel (Sanders 1985 in Sanneh 1993, 13). The primitive missionary community carried the sign of the Judaic identity. The shift happened not so much in the structure of religious belief as in the terms of that structure. "Jesus the rabbi had become Jesus the Messiah" (Ibid., 14). Lamin Sanneh continues:

Thus the significant twist of perceiving Jesus as God's exalted became the gravitational force of the new world of faith and devotion. It gave an otherworldly direction to Christian life and devotion, with faith in the absolute righteousness of God finding its corollary in the provisional, relative character of this world. This opens the way for pluralism by stressing the nonabsolute character and coequality of all earthly arrangements (Ibid., 15).

Here he makes the point that Christianity was not bound to one culture or any culture but had a relative character in all "earthly arrangements". This story continues through the New Testament and church history. The point that I wish to demonstrate is that Christianity has adopted translatability from a very early stage. Culture can be seen as the natural extension of the new religion and this helps us to understand why Christians developed such a cultural appetite without forgetting their own religious counsel. Lamin Sanneh tries to describe the problematic relation of Christianity to culture. "Christianity is parallel to culture, but it is not completely proportionate to it. The religion is not culture, but is not other than culture" (Sanneh 1993, 53). If we understand mission as the *missio Dei*, he continues, "There is a radical pluralism implied in vernacular translation wherein all languages and cultures are, in principle, equal in expressing the word of God" (Ibid., 208).

Christianity is remarkable for the relative ease with which it enters living cultures. In becoming translatable it renders itself



compatible with other cultures. ... Christianity broke free from its absolutized Judaic frame and, through a radical pluralism, adopted the Hellenic culture to the point of near absolutization. ... Translatability is the source of the success of Christianity across cultures ... the expansion of Christianity was not at the expense of the authentic values of culture. ... cross-cultural experience helped to check the tendency toward the divinization of one cultural stream by promoting all cultures as essentially equal in the scale of divine providence (Ibid., 50-51).

Here again Sanneh demonstrates that translatability is the feature of Christianity that made it so successful. It is not bound to one culture but is capable of translating itself to all cultures.

Thomas Kuhn's theory of paradigm<sup>23</sup> suggests that the old paradigm and the new are incommensurable because they are responding to different realities. That happened in physics when the Copernican paradigm was gradually replaced by the Newtonian and again when the latter gave way to the Einsteinian. Protagonist of the old paradigm tend to immunize themselves against the arguments of the new. They resist its challenges with deep emotional reactions, since those challenges threaten to destroy their very perception and experience of reality, indeed their entire world (Hiebert in Bosch 1993, 185). Since the church has a history of being less than eager to change, it is especially appropriate to say it in Einstein's words, "It is more difficult to smash prejudices than atoms". In our time there is a growing awareness that we live in an era of change from one way of understanding reality to another. Our century shows evidence of a major shift in perceiving reality, a quest for a new approach to and understanding of reality (Kraft 1990 and Mead 1991).

Paradigm shifts can be recognized in natural sciences as well as social sciences. Hans Küng's outline for the subdivision of paradigms in theology includes the following:

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<sup>23</sup> A theory critiqued extensively by many, but also used by many like Bosch, 186. One of the criticisms of the paradigm theory is that it fosters relativism, that there really are no ultimate norms or values. Thomas Kuhn uses his own paradigm to argue in his paradigm's defense, "that one can only accept a paradigm's validity if one has stepped into its 'circle' ". And that "there is no standard higher than the assent of the relevant community. All this sounds indeed rather relativistic! We have to admit that there is no such thing as "absolutely" (Thomas Kuhn, 1970, 94).





1. The Apocalyptic Paradigm of Primitive Christianity
2. The Hellenistic Paradigm of the Patristic Period
3. The Medieval Roman Catholic Paradigm
4. The Protestant (Reformation) Paradigm.
5. The Modern Enlightenment Paradigm
6. The Emerging Ecumenical Paradigm (Kung 1984)

In each of these eras Christians, within their own context, wrestled with the question of what the Christian faith and mission meant for them. Without going into a lengthy description of all these paradigms, it is important to notice that all of them meant change; the external and internal conditions changed and the church had to adapt or, at times, lead through transitions toward a new paradigm. How to interact with the surrounding society and culture was constantly challenged. The church should be sensitive to the surrounding culture. Its forms should change, via transculturation, to those appropriate in the new setting and response, to the real needs of the people (Kraft 1990, 317-319).

Whereas Küng recognizes six paradigms and is considered an appropriate tool in trying to discern the evolution of the missionary idea, James P. Martin divides the history of the church into only three eras based more on biblical interpretation:

1. The pre-critical, vitalistic, or symbolic
2. The critical, analytical, and mechanistic
3. The post-critical, holistic, and ecumenical (Martin 1987, vol. 33, 370-385).

P. Martin's paradigm on biblical interpretation helps to understand the different periods of points of view in the teaching of the Christian church and to see our situation from that perspective. His paradigm is a description more of the internal condition of our time in

history and where we come from. The director of Alban Institute<sup>24</sup>, Loren B. Mead talks about only two paradigms not from the missiological or biblical perspective like Küng and Martin but more from the socio-political perspective:

1. The Apostolic Paradigm
2. The Age of Christendom

Loren B. Mead sees the first paradigm as an identity crisis with its Jewish roots and at the same time an attempt to relate to and be distinct from Greco-Roman Empire. He actually speaks about a third paradigm that has yet to appear fully, namely the “post-Christendom” period, which in fact follows Martin rather closely. Like the others, he describes the time between the paradigms as time of confusion and tumult. In the Apostolic times the church was conscious of itself as faithful people surrounded by a hostile environment. The world was not considered neutral, it was opposed to the community formed of common values. But the community had a deep sense of being called to reach out to the community. “Be in the world but not of it” (Mead 1991, 8-12).

The Christendom Paradigm started to emerge in the fourth century. This change took centuries, not just a few generations. During this paradigm the church was identified with the Empire by law. The world around the church was legally identified with the church. There was no separation between the world and the church within the Empire. The law changed the fact that the church was surrounded by a hostile world by removing the hostility from the environment but it also made the church and the environment identical. “Instead of the congregation being a small local group that constituted the church in that place, the understanding of the congregation had been enlarged to include everything in the Empire. The congregation was the church; the church was the Empire.” This meant that the mission front disappeared from the doorsteps of the congregation (Ibid., 13-14).

Küng’s approach is more missiological, Martin’s more scriptural and Mead’s more socio-political approach. What is common to all three is that they all see that the last paradigm is breaking apart. What is really interesting is that David J. Bosch comes to the same

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<sup>24</sup> Alban Institute is a multi-denominational organization providing on-site training, educational programs, consulting, research, and publishing.



conclusion as Mead from a different approach. The local churches are going to be the focal point in the new paradigm. Bosch describes the hierarchy of different denominations as well as the hierarchy that has been between the old and new churches. In a chapter, called “Rediscovering the Local Church”, he states one of his conclusions:

[T]he fundamental change in favor of the local church, everywhere, as the agent of mission both of in its own environment and further afield, cannot be gainsaid and constitutes a decisive advance over positions that had been in vogue for many centuries (Bosch 1993, 381).

It is important to notice that the old paradigm seldom disappears completely. In fact, people are often committed to more than one paradigm at the same time. Unlike in natural sciences, old paradigms can live in theology even after new ones have arrived. It is given that our theologies are partial, and they are culturally and socially based. “For the Christian this means that any paradigm shift can only be carried out on the basis of the gospel and because of the gospel, never, however, against the gospel” (Küng 1987, 194).

An argument can be made that Jesus had no intention of founding a new religion (Schweitzer 1971, 42; Goppelt 1981, 208). The early church struggled between two dilemmas in relating to the surrounding community. The first one was “pars pro toto” - the tension between a community for the sake of others and a community to sever itself from others. The second one was the dilemma between the emphasis of becoming an institution and remaining a movement. H. R. Niebuhr (following Bergson) describes the differences between institution and a movement: The one is conservative, the other progressive; the one is more or less passive, yielding to influences from outside, the other is active, influencing rather than being influenced; the one looks to the past, the other to the future. David J. Bosch adds: “the one is anxious, the other is prepared to take risk; the one guards boundaries, the other crosses them” (Bosch 1993, 51; and Niebuhr 1959, 11f).

Something about this difference can be seen if we compare the Christian community in Jerusalem and that of Antioch in the forties of the first century AD. The Antioch church’s pioneering spirit caused an inspection by Jerusalem. It was clear that the Jerusalem party’s concern was not mission, but consolidation; not grace but law; not



crossing frontiers, but fixing them; not life, but doctrine; not movement, but institution. At this early stage, there were two separate systems developing within the Christian church: the settled ministry with bishops and deacons, and the mobile ministry of apostles, prophets and evangelists. Churches became ever more institutionalized and less concerned with the world outside their walls (Bosch 1993, 51).

This very brief study of the Christian tradition of how the church has faced the cultural barriers taught at the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thunder Bay the important lesson that Christianity had adopted translatability from the very early stage. The history of the Christian church was an encouragement for us to find the appropriate vehicles to face the challenges of our environment. The history of the Christian tradition also taught us the lesson that it is possible to adopt to the surrounding culture without forgetting our own religious and cultural counsel.

The issues of Christian tradition were discussed during a long period of time in the Church Council and different committees during 1994 and 1995. The adopted approach to surrounding culture raised many concerns and fears of losing one's own religious and cultural identity. Many older members said: "This will become a totally English speaking congregation and we will not be having Finnish services anymore." "The "Synod" (the way Finnish speaking members called ELCIC) will take over and Finnish culture will be totally forgotten." Younger members were not afraid of the "Synod" taking over but wanted Hilldale Lutheran Church to retain Finnish culture. Many of them said: "I want this church always to remain Finnish, cherish Finnish culture and celebrate Christmas and other major festivals in the traditional Finnish way." They continued: "This is the home of my Finnish heritage, I meet visitors from Finland and others who have the same roots as I. I am starting to realize that this is becoming more and more important to me as I get older." English speaking members said also that we have to be open to everyone or eventually this congregation will not survive. This was understood as a constant area of growth in the face of the challenge in the new environment to be able to be hospitable to newcomers and visitors.



### 5.2.2. The Canadian Tradition

The Christian tradition from a missiological perspective helped us to see how the church has faced cultural barriers. In this section we try to learn from the Canadian experience. Canada is called “multicultural” and rightly so since it is virtually the only country that has declared itself so. England, for example, is culturally varied, but people are expected to be “English” - however culturally inflated that concept may be. Similarly, the United States is culturally diverse, but there has been a historical sense that people who come to America become American, regardless of how much they may value the cultures of their homeland. Recently “the American melting pot” idea has been questioned and challenged by many. The history of Canadian multiculturalism is very short and not always something to be proud of. It was not until 1971 that multiculturalism was set in place. Serious questions have been raised as to whether multiculturalism is actually possible and what is the Canadian identity in this multicultural society.

Even though people tend to idealize the past, it has its highs and lows. For many, perhaps the “good old days”, though not so good, were good because families, friends and religious and cultural groups helped many to go through hardships when no other help was available. Life was close-knit for those who shared in the dominant groupings, but not for those who didn’t. Involvement in organized religion was something of a national norm. In the first census, in 1871, almost all Canadians identified with a religious group. The Church provided many with refuge in a new land. Other important links to social realms at that time were school and work. But it was not all that sweet like R.W. Bibby says: “Two groups of Canadians paid a particularly high price for group involvement during Canada’s first hundred years - women and cultural minorities” (Bibby 1990, 19). Demographer Myron Weiner comments that societies are rarely open to the arrival of persons with racial or ethnic characteristics different from their own (Weiner 1988, 441-455).

During Canada’s first hundred years, many new immigrants to the country gave up much for their social participation. Canada has been struggling with its age-old cultural group problem for years. The central dilemma has naturally been between the French and British.



The hosting Native population was asked to share the land and problems started to arise between the three groups. Bibby refers to Howard Palmer of the University of Calgary: "English-speaking Canadians were among those who believed that Anglo-Saxon peoples and British principles of government represented the forefront of biological evolution. They felt that Canada's greatness depended upon a solid Anglo-Saxon foundation. New immigrants were assessed by Anglophones on the degree they conformed to the British cultural and physical ideal" (Palmer 1988, 1740-1743). In practice this meant, for example, that immigrants had to settle for the most menial and dangerous jobs.

Sociologist Weinfeld of McGill University notes that "government historically was the direct or indirect agency of minority misfortunes. Discrimination was either perpetrated or tolerated by the government well into the latter half of the twentieth century" (Weinfeld 1987, 593). One such misfortune was the 1876 tax on the pigtail worn by Chinese males (Weinfeld 1987, 593). Blacks were prohibited from attending white schools until 1954. A 1952 Gallup poll found that 55 percent of the population felt that "Canada does not need immigrants." The French attitude was simple: "Let us keep the kind of society we have, unchanged, and unthreatened by the newcomer. We had to share our house once before with an intruder. We do not wish to do so again." As for the attitude of the English Canadians, Lower said that they judged immigrants by their merits - providing that they had white skin (Lower, 1958, 375).

Maybe because of the above reasons, groups including the religious groups tended to be culturally insular, demonstrating limited interest in reaching out to people of different cultural backgrounds from their own. Some of the groups were even outwardly hostile toward newcomers (Bibby 1990, 29).

As Canada evolved from an agrarian society to a modern industrial nation, the three dominant emphases were commonly felt - individualism, pluralism and relativism. During the same period Canada was also greatly influenced by America and its social development, the inclination of individuals, and last but not least, by the economic factor.

In this new freedom by 1950's and 60's several components were important. Individualism was increasingly valued as personal



fulfillment instead of the group. The emphasis on communalism of the first hundred years was being replaced by a new emphasis on individualism. Before the newcomers were forced to assimilate but now it was time for a culturally diverse society, a time for pluralism. Assimilation and segregation were seen as racism that needed to be stamped out. In relativism, individualism found its perfect rationale. During that time cross-cultural research found the concept called cultural relativism, common needs in diverse ways, when one expression was not more true or better than the other. Relativism gave “legitimacy to the personal pursuit of well-being in a multicultural setting” (Bibby 1990, 46).

Arthur Lower wrote at the end of the 1950's that although everyone hates compromise,

[w]here you have a country of two primary cultures, two primary religions, and two pulls on fundamental allegiance - one to the past and one to the country - and now, another large, heterogeneous group which must be built into the original structure, only one attitude becomes possible, short of endemic civil war, the attitude of compromise (Lower 1958, 382).

Canada's first and foremost fundamental question to resolve was how Quebec and the rest of Canada could exist as a nation. It was agreed that Canada had two founding peoples - the French and the British and two official languages - French and English. The second major intergroup issue that needed to be resolved was that of the place of other cultural groups. How would Canada respond to newcomers? The Royal Commission recommended that people of other cultural extractions should also have the opportunity to retain what is good from their national heritage. Cultural diversity, it was argued, would enrich Canada. In 1971 the second of Canada's critical building blocks - multiculturalism - was set in place beside bilingualism. Prime Minister Trudeau summed things this way:

A policy of multiculturalism within a bilingualism framework commends itself to the government as the most suitable means of assuring the cultural freedom of Canadians (Corpus Almanac of Canada 1974).



Trudeau extended his reflections on the nature and purpose of multiculturalism in an address to a Ukrainian group in 1972:

[Canada's multicultural composition] and the moderation which it includes and encourages, makes Canada a very special place, and a stronger place as well. Each of the many fibers contributes its own qualities and Canada gains strength from the combination. We become less like others; we become less susceptible to cultural, social or political envelopment by others. We become less inclined - certainly less obliged - to think in terms of national grandeur; inclined not at all to assume a posture of aggressiveness, or ostentation, or might. Our image is of a land of people with many differences - but many contributions, many variations in view - but a single desire to live in harmony.... On a planet of finite size, the most desirable of all characteristics is the ability and desire to cohabit with persons of differing backgrounds, and to benefit from the opportunities which this offers (Christiano 1990, 19-20).

The Finns who came over to Canada brought with them their own traditions on how to relate to other cultures. In many ways including the church, the Finns followed the ways they were accustomed to. Like Charles H. Kraft writes from a cross-cultural perspective:

A 'formal-correspondence church' usually models itself slavishly after the foreign church that founded it (whether that founding church be a Euro-American missionary body working outside Euro-America or a denominational heritage taken from one part of Euro-America or a denominational heritage taken from one part of Euro-America to another) (Kraft 1990, 319).

Because of their geographical position between different cultures and church traditions, Finns have gone through several cultural transitions. When the Finnish immigrants came to Canada the transition process that followed was not totally strange. Finns have been between the East and the West through the last millennia, periodically being under the power of Russia and Sweden and certainly being influenced by both cultures. Christianity came to Finland in or





around 1155 in the form of Roman Catholicism from the West. The Eastern part of Finland, Karelia, was influenced by Byzantine culture and the Russian Orthodox Church. Finland went through Reformation and became a Lutheran country. Even though the first bishop in Finland was British and the Catholic church was the church in Finland for about 500 years, German culture has had a great impact on Finnish culture because of the Reformation. Since the revival movements are still alive in the church, it is also important to notice that German Pietism influenced them a lot. Politically Finland has also been considered as a bridge between East and West, especially during the cold war. The Germans even coined a special term “suomettuminen”, meaning that things were done and said to please our powerful Eastern neighbor. What was said before about how immigrants were treated can be applied to Finns as well. Finns had the advantage that they were Europeans and that they had the right color of skin.

### **5.3. Summary**

After discussing the issues of the history and tradition history in 1994 with the Church Council, Local Advisory Group/Mission Committee and the congregation, I wrote down the following summary from the learning experience and what it meant to the people at the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thunder Bay:

The early church demonstrates that it had adopted translatability from the very first stage. Culture was understood as a natural extension of the new religion and that is why Christians developed such a cultural appetite without forgetting their own religious counsel. Here one can also see the potential for us, the Finnish Lutheran Canadian immigrants, to lose our selves for others in the Canadian Mosaic in our own neighborhood, and so be able to retain it. It is possible to adopt to the surrounding culture without forgetting our own religious and cultural counsel.

History certainly helps us to understand the behavior of some of the Finns who totally denied their ethnic background, including their language. They withdrew themselves totally from the Finnish community. On the other hand, it is understandable why others withdraw themselves totally from any “kielinen” (person or activity of



foreign language) activities. For many of them the church was the safe island in the middle of a hostile world.

Our congregation has been a part of the larger paradigm of the ELCIC and ELCF. Now, because the congregation itself has to make its move, it is facing a paradigm shift that goes deep into the roots of the old paradigm. The mission frontier is not distant anymore and the mission is not only an idea that we support. There has been a change, the mission is right here and we are at the mission frontier ourselves. The mission is no longer something that we support but rather something that we do. The church has been turned upside down or inside out. The role of the national church body is changing to support the mission that takes place at each congregation.

Even though our congregation is facing a very special challenge when trying to cross cultural boundaries, fundamentally the challenge for mission is the same throughout the church. We might have more to lose and maybe more to gain but the mission is the same.

That we were at the time in a change of paradigms was brought up more often as the time went by, mainly because of the crisis within the church and changes in society. “The small Group of pioneers sense that the existing scientific model is riddled with anomalies and is unable to solve emerging problems ... they then begin to search for a new theoretical structure, new paradigm ... until eventually the original, problem-ridden paradigm is abandoned” (Bosch 1993, 184).<sup>25</sup> This quotation describes our congregation’s experience.

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<sup>25</sup> Following Thomas Kuhn and his theory of paradigm.



## 6. SOCIOLOGICAL CONTEXT

### 6.1. Introduction

In this chapter I am going to study the context within which our congregation lived. Together with the congregation we examined the cultural information that was helpful for the transition process. In this chapter we viewed studies previously done, specifically among Finnish immigrants. This chapter includes also a brief look at studies of ethnic identity, Finnish spirituality, the present status of religion in Canada and the difference between Canada and the United States. This information, according to The Whitehead/Whitehead Method was shared with the congregation at the time they were developing the strategy. This material was studied in 1993 - 1994 at the Church Council in Local Advisory Group/Mission Committee and in several small groups to help to understand the tradition historic context of the congregation.

Reginald W. Bibby, author of the bestseller, Fragmented Gods, tells the story of his opportunity in 1989 to meet with a small religious organization known as the Danish Church Abroad (DCA). One of the things he found intriguing about the DCA was its clarity of purpose. Its primary goal was to provide temporary church services for interested Danish emigrants in their mother tongue. Organizationally, these DCA local churches in Canada not only are expected, but almost encouraged, to fade away or to become indigenous Lutheran churches, sometimes causing pain for those involved. Benny Grey Schuster, pastor of the Granby congregation in Surrey B.C., wrote to R.W. Bibby:

It's one thing what our mother organization in Denmark is foreseeing. It's quite another thing how the individual congregations feel about it. It is difficult - not to say psychologically impossible - to literally pour blood, sweat, and tears into the ongoing life of a small church if you haven't got the hope of survival after your own generation (Bibby 1993, 283).



The DCA is explicit about its goal: to service Lutheran emigrants from Denmark on a transitional basis. When its service is no longer needed, it will move. There is a limit to how far “your mother church” can convey its offspring. The time comes when one has to ask, “What business are we in? Are we going to live or die?” This Danish Church does not pretend to reach out and it is honest about its mission. Even though Bibby and the pastor of the Danish immigrant congregation are talking about the Danes, it speaks deeply to our congregation and is an expression of the same pain that has been the creative force for change. This pain led the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thunder Bay into crisis and, as often happens when one copes with crises, it leads to a new level in life.

Carleton University law professor, Margaret Ogilvie, writes:

[S]elf-definition is vital to identity and survival in the rough and tumble of an international free market in religion as it never was in the Old Christian Canada. If we do not know what we believe, we can hardly expect others to know, or to care.... Without a firm doctrinal identity our congregations are little more than lower middle-class social clubs (Ogilvie 1993, 27-30).

Ogilvie makes an important point that congregations are tempted to lose their identity and become social clubs. Ethnic congregations, like ours in Thunder Bay, are faced with the same temptation. According to R.W. Bibby the Finnish Lutheran congregations in Canada was not unlike the Danish Church Abroad. They had considerable ethnic homogeneity, gave limited effort to recruiting outsiders, provided varied services to members, declined when no longer used by the people for which the group came into being, and essentially followed their own people when establishing new congregations (Bibby 1993, 284).

Finnish ethnic congregations, like the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thunder Bay, faced the same challenges as any other congregation. It had the tendency to be insular and isolated, both socially and culturally, and tended toward a maintenance mentality. Even when it came to the mission, the mission seemed to be ‘over there’ when it could have begun right outside the church doors. There is nothing wrong with clubs, and since there are a variety of service



clubs, why not have a religious club? An ethnic congregation is even more tempted to be a club for a certain ethnic group. This raised a fundamental question of congregational identity. If we wanted to be a religious club, then should we have pretend to be something else?

The question was to what extent Hilldale Lutheran Church would have defined itself as a bridge to the people outside its own ethnic and language group. This outreach would not have been just to produce bigger churches, but for the purpose of sharing faith with people who needed it. Could the congregation had gone beyond a preoccupation with the maintenance of an ethnic church to a preoccupation with a mission to the multicultural community?

Peter Berger has written that sociology involves “looking at old things in new ways” (Berger 1963). We faced a similar challenge, trying to see our situation in a new way, which would lead us into the future. For too long the culture and surrounding community had been seen as hostile, even as an enemy. Professor Gordon Harland acknowledges that there is a need to:

... approach the situation as a great opportunity, for the limitations of contemporary secular culture call us to a fresh remembrance of the treasures of the Faith and of the need to articulate and make them available for a searching age (Harland 1992, 14).

## ***6.2. Assimilation Among Finns in Canada and USA***

There are some studies of assimilation and retention among the Finnish immigrants in North America.

Kolehmainen, after forty years of observation and study, identifies ten influencing forces upon the assimilation of first generation American Finns. First are the prevailing climates of opinion in the United States, “the intermittent yet powerful prejudices in the nation as well as in local regions and communities against the

maintenance of separate ethnic enclaves.”<sup>26</sup> Howard Palmer points out that similar adherence to a melting pot theory and to anglo-conformity have been sufficiently evident factors in the Canadian situation as well (Palmer 1975).

Michael Maunula studied culture retention and identity maintenance and reached the conclusion that if the parents were unable to imbue the socialization process with a good dose of Finnish ethnic culture they would also have great difficulty in influencing their level of knowledge and practice of customs at home. He concludes that childhood affiliation with Finnish culture is important to a person's maintenance of identity. “[t]hat the means to maintain a Finnish identity are more universally available. Those with a strong Finnish cultural background improve and maintain their awareness while those lacking a childhood socialization into Finnish culture can reassert their heritage by learning about the culture and language” (Maunula 1984, 196-197). Among cultural traits language seems to be the single most significant means whereby the Finnish ethnic culture is retained (Maunula 1984, 199).

Relatively recent immigration has strengthened cultural identity and slowed down the assimilation process, especially in the areas of large Finnish settlements. Larger Finnish communities, like the one in the Thunder Bay area, are able to support many services. Lennard Sillanpää has come to the same conclusion on the assimilation of Finnish immigrants: "The degree to which a Finnish immigrant integrated into the wider society and into his own ethnic group depended on the services available in his group: if few were available, he must adjust to the wider society" (Sillanpää, 1976, 53).

Early period immigrants learned to rely extensively on their own community devices because little help came from the government. Conversely, immigrants who came after the war were helped by the Department of Manpower and Immigration. Immigrants were more

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<sup>26</sup> John Ilmari Kolehmainen, "Americanization and the Search for Identity," in Old Friends -- Strong Ties, Viljo Niitemaa et.al. eds. (Turku, Finland Institute for Migration, 1976), 267- 268. Kolehmainen in random order identifies ten influencing forces. They are: 1. The prevailing climates of opinion in the United States; 2. The demographic, geographical, physical, and other features of the settlements in which the immigrants and their offspring lived; 3. The parents and their families; 4. The language situation; 5. Family names or patronymics; 6. Life's many experiences; 7. Contingency or the play of chance; 8. Age and sex; 9. The psychic make-up of each individual; 10. The nature, frequency, and continuity of ties with the old Country.



urban and Finnish clubs existed for social reasons only. The net result was a faster introduction to Canadian society (Sillanpää, 1976, 57,58).

Michael Maunula in his study mentions that the Finns who were raised in an urban setting retained more of their culture than rural Finns (Maunula 1984, 192). This finding can also be supported by the previously mentioned study done in the area of Sudbury by Lennard Sillanpää.

Newcomers to Canada in the early days were forced to assimilate. By the 1960's, the emphasis on individualism - officially at least - was changing the attitude towards newcomers. Assimilation and segregation were seen as racism that needed to be stamped out. At all these times, the church has been a very important institution to help immigrants find their place in their new homeland.

Independent Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church<sup>17</sup> was established in 1950 as mentioned before. At present the majority of our members are those who came to Canada during 1950's and 1960's during the time when attitude towards immigrants was changing enabling them to retain their ethnic culture. The urban setting in Thunder Bay with a large population of first generation Finns has also been slowing down the assimilation process and helping the Finnish immigrants to retain their ethnic culture.

### ***6.3. Finnish Spirituality***

The difference noted earlier between ethnic groups as retainers might also be true about their spirituality:

[W]hen seen historically, culturally, and religiously, the belief system of the Finn is conditioned by loose affinity with myth and magic, by a reverence for nature, by a peculiar history grounded in suffering, by his view of the comic as sublime and vice-versa, by tension between established church and strong cultic and sectarian tendencies, mysticism, a basic feeling for the tragic sense of life, and finally, by its approach to the great mystery - death (Jalkanen 1972).



Many, like Ralph J. Jalkanen, have made similar observations regarding Finnish spirituality. Like a typical Finnish character, if there is one, Finnish spirituality is generally speaking quite “serious”. This seriousness effects also the relationship of a Finn to his/her environment. Every nation has its own mythology, and when we speak about myths we necessarily also speak about gods. If there is a theological world, typical to a nation, as W. Paul Jones suggests, it begins with the mythic speaking from the depth of ancestral memory. Jones' point is that the issue is not, "Does God exist?" but, "Which of the various realities one encounters functions as God?" (Jones, 1989, 15). It is this orienting sensitivity which produces, universally and necessarily, the texture of the unique theological world which each individual inhabits. Our world is seen through "glasses" that are honed by root metaphors that function together as a paradigm, so operating as to "author and authorize the way we think, the way we act, the way we communicate, and the way we judge" (Berger 1967, 154).<sup>27</sup>

For example, the following Finnish sayings collected from folk wisdom describe the Finns:

You cannot escape your fate. Man is like the spoke of a wheel, sometimes it's up and sometimes it's down. Fortune never abides in the knapsack of the poor. Man must live his life under every possible condition until his head turns gray. Man must bend even as the willow does to bind the fence. All people cannot live on the good soil, therefore, we must live proudly on the poor one. Who tastes the sweet in the beginning must in the end taste of the bitter. The poverty stricken must bear a great deal. A hard shoe straightens out the feet (an unbearable fate forces man to grow). He who complains of many things will see the evil stay with him. Don't shout about your burdens, don't complain about your troubles, they will not be accepted by anyone (Jalkanen 1972, 60-61).

Also revealing is the following true story which I have been told about the first Finnish immigrants that came to the Thunder Bay

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<sup>27</sup> See also, Max Black, Models and Metaphor (Cornell University Press, 1962); David Tracy, The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Cultures of Pluralism (Crossroad Press, 1981).





area. Land was plentiful, but the Finns picked the homesteads that had the most rocks because the rocks reminded them of the rocky fields back home. "When it gets hard, it gets better." This style of character, in my understanding, might also affect the spiritual life of the Finns.

Finnish spirituality was strongly influenced by ancient mythology and folk religion before Christianity came to Finland. The religious traditions of the Finns, like those of any people, derive from the interplay of various forces at work in the process of adapting to the environment. The natural habitat, the level of technological development and the resulting social, political and economic arrangements lay the foundation for the religious framework, which is then further developed and modified by internal and external cultural forces.

The origins of the pre-Christian religion of the Finns are found in the common heritage of the Finno-Ugric peoples. Our knowledge of the hypothetical common Finno-Ugric religion is meager and largely inferential, based mainly on philosophical evidence (Salo 1972, 1-18). I am not aware of any studies about the special character of Canadian Lutheran spirituality. Since most of the Lutherans came from Europe, i.e. Scandinavia and Germany, they brought with them their spirituality colored by their culture. In short, spirituality is an important ingredient in ethnicity.

Since ethnicity and ethnic identity seem to serve not just what is seen as cultural and behavioral dimensions, but the deeper time-dimension that is so crucial for us. Even, and perhaps especially in this technological era, ethnicity has to be treated carefully because it touches the same areas of human phenomenon as religion, and drives towards the same purpose (Isajiw 1990 and Herberg 1989).

#### ***6.4. Churches in Canada - Common Challenge***

In today's Canada, religion no longer occupies center stage. Religion has also ceased to be life informing at the level of the average Canadian and for most, it is extremely specialized in content. The

fragments of beliefs, practices and professional services are rooted in important changes associated with the industrialization of Canada. In modern day Canada, people are faced with the demand to play many roles. Religious commitment frequently only adds to role conflict. On the other hand, the choice of religious fragments helps them avoid conflict. Religion has always claimed to bring something from the beyond to the culture. Bibby claims that in Canada “the stability of religious affiliation is matched by the poverty of religious significance” (Bibby 1990a, 149).

Churches talk about the “inactive,” “lapsed members,” “defectors,” “switchers,” “disaffiliates,” “apostates,” and of course, “backsliders.” “What will it take to bring them back?” The equation of non-attendance with disaffiliation has been widely practiced by academics. But are we looking in the right places? According to the most recent census figures, almost 90% of Canadians continue to claim Roman Catholic (47%) or Protestant (41%) ties. The point is simple, but extremely important: Canadians are not abandoning the historically dominant groups. According to the census and Bibby’s analysis based on it, Canadians are not deserting the nation’s prominent religious groups. Lutherans (3%) are also solidly entrenched (Bibby 1990a, 46-49).

Bibby bases his opinion on the findings on intergenerational affiliation (see TABLE 6.4. - 1.) Almost 90% of Canadians with Roman Catholic or Protestant parents have retained those ties themselves. Only 1% affiliate with a different religious tradition.



Table 6.4. - 1. Intergenerational Affiliation: All Canadians (*In %'s*) (Bibby 1990a, 49).

<b>Parents' Affiliation</b>	<b>Present Affiliation</b>						<b>Total</b>
	<b>N</b>	<b>RC</b>	<b>Prot</b>	<b>Jew</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>None</b>	
Roman Catholic	457	88	3	0	1	8	100
Protestant	461	3	88	0	1	8	100
Jew <sup>1</sup>	12	0	0	100	0	0	100
Other <sup>1</sup>	7	0	7	0	93	0	100
None	54	13	32	0	2	53	100

SOURCE: PROJECT CAN85

<sup>1</sup> The number of cases in the sample (12 and 7, respectively) are obviously insufficient to permit stable percentaging. They are included for interest value

Further, it is important to notice that almost half of the people with no religious parentage affiliate with Protestantism or Catholicism. According to Bibby, these intergenerational stability patterns are unlikely to change. The PROJECT TEEN CANADA analyses of the nation's 15- to 19-year-olds have found that approximately 90% of Roman Catholics and Protestants are claiming the same religious-group preferences as their parents. More specifically the stability of religious ties between generations is also present at the Protestant denominational level (see TABLE 6.4. - 2.). Even though Protestants do some switching they still show a strong tendency to remain within their groupings, switching in no more than about one in ten instances. This observation by Bibby is based on several studies and indicates even higher stability than the PROJECT CAN85 (TABLE 6.4. - 2.) which describes intergenerational switching (Bibby and Posterski 1985, 124).



Table 6.4. - 2. Intergenerational Switching: Protestants (*In %'s*)  
(Bibby 1990a, 50)

	<b>Present Affiliation</b>							
<b>Parents' Affiliation</b>	N	Ang	UC	Cons	Luth	Pre s	RC	Oth
Anglican	138	71	12	4	1	1	5	6
United Church	140	11	75	1	1	4	1	7
Conservative	58	7	12	65	0	3	1	12
Lutheran	39	1	5	2	75	1	4	12
Presbyterian	41	17	15	1	1	54	3	9

SOURCE: PROJECT CAN85

According to Bibby, (TABLE 6.4. - 2.) the general pattern is that the smaller the group, the greater the inclination to move out. This tendency seems to reflect marriage opportunities within the groups, given the different sizes of their “marriage pools”. Still, the Protestant movement out of the Protestant category is relatively infrequent as said before, happening in no more than about one in ten instances.

Regardless of their levels of attendance at services, relatively few Canadians actually desert their religious groups which makes clear why searches for disaffiliates have come up mostly empty. A surprisingly small number of people have been lost, and religious affiliation is extremely stable now and should remain so in the foreseeable future (Bibby 1990a, 51).

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the religious “none” or “no religion” group usually consists of people who carry the “none” label only for fairly short periods of time. They are usually younger people who claim no religious ties until such time as they marry, have children, and experience death in the family (Bibby 1993, 158). Bibby’s colleagues, Merlin Brinkerhoff and Marlene Mackie, recently pointed out in their detailed analysis of “nones” in Canada that “particular individuals move in and out of that category at different points in their lives.” Generalizations about such people, they say, “should be made very cautiously” (Brinkerhoff and Mackie 1993,



109). What this means is that saying that the religious “nones” have no religious preference is hardly the same as saying that they have no religious culture. All it takes is a crucial event to bring it to the surface.

An overwhelming majority (close to 90%) of Canadians still continue to identify with the historically dominant groups. “Over generations, religion has been fused with one’s family, biography, and culture. The bond is not readily dissolved” (Brinkerhoff and Mackie 1993, 51). Canadian religious identity is acquired through their families and additional significant others. It carries with it a religious culture that, in turn, is typically fused with family culture (Bibby 1993, 153).

Religion is learned in a childhood family settings and is present in rites of passage associated with life’s crucial events. The importance of these rites should not be underestimated. Participation in them can almost indelibly link individuals with religious groups and traditions. To be baptized and confirmed as a Lutheran contributes to psychological and emotional attachment.

Stuart Schoenfeld of York University writes about Jewish rites, the bar and bar mitzvahs, which are far more than merely ceremonies acknowledging movement into adulthood:

The group gathers together to renew its moral bonds, to symbolically assert its cohesiveness .... They are modern rituals of identification more than they are traditional rituals of initiation (Schoenfeld 1986, 9-10 in Bibby 1990a, 55)<sup>28</sup>

Bilingualism and multiculturalism are largely greeted as the federal government’s official response to the human diversity of the country. Unlike the Americans, Canadians have not been imbued with an ideology valuing “the pursuit of truth,” but with one valuing “the pursuit of appreciation for diverse views.” Bibby writes:

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<sup>28</sup> Stuart Schoenfeld, “Intergration into the Group and Sacred Uniqueness, An Analysis of Adult Bar Mitzvah.” Presented at the annual meeting of The Association for the Sociology of Religion, August 1986, New York.



In such a cultural milieu, in which recruitment is in questionable taste and where claims to the truth are virtually unacceptable outside the group in which they are made, people would not be expected to move in random fashion from one group to another (Bibby 1990a, 61).

The general pluralistic ideal has only solidified religious affiliation loyalty in Canada.

As said before, Canadians give little indication of abandoning their ties with the established religious groups; the same can also be said about their beliefs. Canadians continue to work within a conventional belief framework when it comes to God, Jesus, and life after death. At the same time, they exhibit a wide range of ideas about the three themes. Nonetheless, things have changed. Bibby sees more and more people drawing upon religion as consumers, adopting a belief here and a practice there. What this means, according to studies done by Bibby, is first that religion is no longer understood as a meaning system addressing all of life. Thus drop-off in attendance at services is merely a symptom of the increasing tendency of Canadians to consume religion selectively. All this is part of the increasing movement in this century from religious commitment to religious consumption (PROJECT CAN85 in Bibby 1990a, passim 62-81).

Secondly, because of this affiliation stability, owing to factors including intergenerational transmission and the Canadian emphasis upon pluralism rather than the pursuit of truth, the competition for consumers is not so much between groups as within them (Bibby 1990a, 121).

A third important feature of the Canadian religion market has been the diversification of available beliefs and practices, programs and professional services (Bibby 1990, 125). Like businesses that constantly change with the times, this ability to reconceptualize the purpose in the light of the changing world is the key to success (Naisbitt and Aburdene 1990, 290). Religion has come to have a highly specialized place in American society. Robert Bellah and his associates note in Habits of the Heart that “diversity of practice has been seen as legitimate because religion is perceived as a matter of individual choice”; there is, however, “the implicit qualification that the practices themselves accord with public decorum and the adherents abide by the moral standards of the community” (Bellah et al. 1985, 225). The



situation seems to be quite the same in this regard on both sides of the border.

It has been often noted that the Finnish immigrants retain much of the cultural attitudes that they had in Finland just before moving to Canada. I have not been able to access any studies that would confirm this observation. My personal experience is that it has some truth in it. This phenomena is understandable because in the new environment it often takes a long time to learn to use and integrate the new information with what one has learned back in their homeland. The reason why this process is so slow can be the big difference in language and culture. Because of the retention factor and reasons mentioned above, the first generation Finnish immigrant settlement follows slowly the common Canadian cultural and religious milieu. The second and third generations seem to follow the general patterns of the Canadian belief framework.

We can try to meet the new with the new and try to listen. This approach can be called experimentalism, but if it means that churches become primarily social interest groups, then they are going to be obliterated by superior secular competitors. Instead we can try to face the new with the old and refuse to listen. Bibby predicts that this strategy would lead to a head-on collision with the future. "They will become readily aware of the positive features of evolving science and technology and the necessity of caring going well beyond the boundaries of one's own group." Bibby continues to speculate about the third possibility beyond religious fragments: "If religion is to interact effectively with culture, then it has to be able to transcend culture, so that it has something to bring, and be responsive to culture, so that it knows how to bring it" (Bibby 1990a, 260).

American trend experts Naisbitt (1984) and Toffler (1983) observe that in the United States people are showing a renewed interest in identification characteristics, such as region, ethnicity, and religion. Usually the experts speak of a close tie between ethnicity and religion. This tie between religion and culture can be seen at the group level as well as at the individual level, whenever people see themselves as United or Anglican or Lutheran or Baptist. Whether the tense is present or past may matter little.



What can we learn from this? What then does the church have to offer? People are intrigued by mystery; they question the unexplained, the unknown and the supernatural. People also search for meaning for their lives. Passage rituals are very important even for modern society. Most people also have a religious memory. What they have experienced in the past makes a psychological and cultural link. In many ways it is important that the tradition continues.

### 6.5. *We Are Not Like the Americans*

In the USA and Canada history has produced two very different religious marketplaces.<sup>29</sup>

The rules of the religious marketplace differ in Canada because a pluralistic ideal means that religious groups are expected to co-exist for serving instead of competing for truth. In Westhues' words, "Canada cannot be understood as an attempt to embody a theory of society, but only as an effort to achieve working agreements among diverse parties with conflicting theories of society" (Westhues 1978, 258). In contrast to the Americans, "we did not separate violently from Europe, " instead as Pierre Berton reminds, we "cut our ties cautiously in the Canadian manner - so cautiously, so imperceptibly that none of us is quite sure we actually achieved our independence" (Berton 1986, 36).

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<sup>29</sup> Writers such as Andrew Malcolm and Pierre Berton have provided us with comparisons of the two cultures. Pierre Berton, *Why We Act Like Canadians* (Toronto: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1986). Andrew Malcolm, *The Canadians* (New York: Times Books, 1985).

Fortunately, Kenneth Westhues (Roman Catholicism), Harold Fallding (mainline Protestantism), Harry Hiller (Conservative Protestantism), and Stuart Schoenfeld (Judaism) have already made those important contributions: Harold Fallding, "Mainline Protestantism in Canada and the United States of America: An Overview," *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 3 (1978): 141-160.

Harry Hiller, "Contentalism and the Third Force of Religion," *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 3 (1978), 183-207.

Stuart Schoenfeld, "The Jewish Religion in North America: Canadian and American Comparison" *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 3 (1978): 209-231.

Kenneth Westhues, "Stars and Stripes, the Maple Leaf, and the Papal Coat of Arms," *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 3 (1978): 245-61.

For an excellent examination of national variations in secularization in the western world, especially its political aspects, see David Martin, *A Sociology of English Religion* (London: SCM Press, 1967).





According to R.W. Bibby: “Specialized society is met with specialized religion.... Culture leads; religion follows.” If religious groups continue to operate essentially as they are at present, what can be predicted with a high degree of confidence is a continued drop-off in regular attendance at services. According to Bibby, the most notable determinant of adult affiliation and attendance is parental and church socialization in childhood. Sean O’Sullivan’s observation receives solid support from research: “Faith, after all, is not something that comes suddenly or grows in isolation; it is passed on in large measure by simple, devout faith of parents and others” (O’Sullivan 1986, 40). Bruce Hunsberg, a psychologist at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario, is among those who, for some time, have been finding that “the reported emphasis placed on religion in one’s childhood home is one of the best predictors of later religiosity” (Hunsberg 1984, 239).

Several studies have shown that there is incredible ignorance of the basics of religious content, regardless of whether people are marginal affiliates or active members.<sup>30</sup> As attendance declines, along with personal commitment, it should surprise no one that knowledge about religion diminishes. As mentioned above, family history and rites of passage are far more important to religious identification and religious memory than the rational response to content.

## **6.6. Summary**

After discussing these issues of sociological context in 1993 - 1994 with the Church Council, Local Advisory Group/Mission Committee and the congregation, I wrote down the following summary from the learning experience and what it meant to the people at Hilldale Lutheran Church:

It is important to understand that Canadians affiliate strongly with their historically dominant groups, and their religious affiliation

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<sup>30</sup> Studies like: 1975 PROJECT CANADA; Anglicans in the Toronto Diocese, *Anglitrends*, 1985; The Assembly of Quebec Bishops’ in their analysis of Catholicism, 1992 etc.



especially is extremely stable. This means first of all that the Finnish Lutherans, too, might have a strong affiliation to the church where they have been baptized, confirmed and married. It is important to note that affiliation and attendance are not the same. People who have an affiliation to a certain church or denomination do not necessarily attend. “It is not that they’re leaving; it’s just that they are not coming!”<sup>31</sup> One of the most specific reasons in our congregation for why the second and third generation do not attend is the language barrier. On the other hand, it makes the point clear that our mission is most likely to succeed among those who have some kind of affiliation with our church. Bibby’s analysis shows that it is difficult to make someone cross these boundaries.

Due to the fact that our congregation has had many baptisms, confirmations, weddings and funerals the congregation had a huge potential, which was correctly seen in advance when the vision to work for a change started to take shape in 1987. The congregation had been performing these rites of passage for all who had asked, and therefore, the community had a large number of people with a psychological and emotional attachment to our church.

It is of great importance for our vision and mission to realize that attendance is not a measure of affiliation, or at least is only a crude indicator of one’s affiliation. Our congregation has adopted a mission statement that does not want to draw a strict line between the active members of the congregation and those who affiliate with our church. “We are originally a Finnish Lutheran congregation with a strong history and sense of independence and still follow the ‘Folk Church’ tradition of being open and willing to serve everybody.”<sup>32</sup> Theologically the congregation wants to practice the Lutheran understanding that through baptism we become to be the members of the church. Religious identification is psychological and emotional in nature, and it commonly survives even when the organizational support system is not in place.

The fact is, Canadians seldom move away from the religious preferences of their parents. When looking for the touch point in the

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<sup>31</sup> A remark of Archbishop Garnsworthy to priests gathered in Toronto for the release of the study *Anglitrends*. Quoted in Bibby, *Fragmented gods*, 37.

<sup>32</sup> The Mission Statement of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thunder Bay, adopted in its annual meeting February 12, 1995. The mission statement and the process of developing it is in Appendix 2.



lives of those that we try to reach, we need to recognize the power of the religious experience of childhood. The people we are trying to reach are people who have been baptized, or perhaps went to Sunday School and were confirmed in our church. They have a connection or affiliation that they are unlikely to change.

The strategy for Hildale Lutheran Church and the purpose of our mission in Thunder Bay is to invite these people back “home” and provide for them a place that is meaningful in their present situation. We also have another important affiliation, namely the ethnicity of at least one of the parents. These things considered, we might be most successful in our mission among those who have a connection to our church through rites of passage in their personal or family history or ethnicity. On the other hand, when we are trying to reach the community we must understand the affiliations that over 90% of Canadians have, and be realistic in our objectives.

As part of the family history, key events such as Christmas and Easter are critically important. At these events, both religious and ethnic identity are reaffirmed and memories are being constructed.

Ethnic identity, as identity in general, is formed largely by an individual’s reflection and comparison to others. It is important to note that ethnic identity is not unchangeable, but shapes itself in reflection on the present and the anticipated future. The impact of ethnicity varies depending upon current conditions and the experiences of individuals and groups in relation to the members and institutions of the larger society. The identity of the Finnish immigrants in Thunder Bay is largely shaped by the present, but also by the future and by plans for the future. Recognizing this mutability is especially important because ethnicity tends to be transformed through the group’s interaction with other groups in their environment, especially the dominant group.





## 7. CHARACTERISTICS OF HILDALE LUTHERAN CHURCH

### *7.1. Applying Systems Theory to Hildaale Lutheran Church, Case Study*

The role of the researcher in this project was to prepare the material of the characteristics of our congregation to be studied. This information, according to The Whitehead/Whitehead Method was shared with the congregation at the time when they were developing the strategy. This material was studied during 1993 - 1994 at the Church Council, Local Advisory Group/Mission Committee and in several small groups to help to understand the characteristics of Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thunder Bay.

There is a legion of books in the category “church growth”. These all contain possibly valid information for this study, but since my scope is the transition of an ethnic congregation, I will focus on our specific problem to avoid (if it is even now possible) the danger of this study being “a mile wide and an inch deep.” It is important, however, to realize the importance of such literature since many of the challenges are similar for the mainline churches in Canada.

“The seeds of decline are found in our successes” (Parson and Leas 1993, 1). This axiom applies well to the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thunder Bay.<sup>33</sup> We pay a price to discover what will work out in our lives. When we place ourselves (or are placed) outside of our zone of comfort, we learn and grow. The history of the settlement in Canada, as well as the history of Finnish immigrants in Canada, is teaching us that our pioneering produces success (at least at times) yet we tend to become homesteaders. Our success becomes our precious habit. Our congregation, in many ways, has been very successful in its ministry among the newly arrived Finnish immigrants.

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<sup>33</sup> According to our congregational survey, Finnish heritage has been and still is the most successful ministry of our church. See, for example, TABLE 7.4.3. – 1a. and 1b.

This phenomenon is what Parson and Leas call “the tyranny of successful habits” (Parson and Leas 1993, 1).

Our congregation, like many, got stuck in its success. The realization of the success in the past and declining active membership was the starting point of this whole PAR project. Parish hall walls were covered with pictures of those who had been confirmed but majority of whom were not attending<sup>34</sup>. The average age of the membership was getting higher year by year. It is easy to point out the earlier time of vitality and growth and the efforts to build on our success. Furthermore, it is also quite easy to identify our strengths and the connection between those strengths and the past success.<sup>35</sup> It is kind of a paradox that our successes in the ministry among the Finnish immigrants led us to embrace organizational patterns and habits that no longer serve us.

Our congregation was able to “succeed” because we were able to connect our unique resources (Finnish ethnicity, ethnic identity and language and also the Finnish Lutheran heritage) and competencies with the current needs of the newly arrived immigrants.<sup>36</sup> This can be called the pioneering dimension that helps the congregation to adapt to the environment. George Parson states that most of the congregational decline he has observed is the result of a church finding a pattern that worked and staying with that pattern long past its usefulness (Parsons and Leas 1993, 2). At the present time, the Finnish speaking population is aging and declining because of natural reasons.<sup>37</sup> Is the congregation able to switch from a pattern that has worked so well to something that is more responsive to the changing environment?<sup>38</sup>

Congregational leadership is vulnerable to this kind of tunnel vision that can also be called in organizational behavior terms, “learning disabilities” (Peter Senge 1990, *passim*). The leaders are vulnerable to these learning disabilities, which include our tendency to maximize our habits. For many years our services were held only in the Finnish language, and even though many were confirmed every year, the congregational leadership was not seriously concerned about

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<sup>34</sup> The average number of those who were confirmed annually during the first 45 years is 27. Since 1995 between 5 - 13 have been confirmed annually.

<sup>35</sup> More about the way our congregation understands its past is found in Appendix 2. “Developing A Mission Statement For A Canadian Finnish Lutheran Congregation”.

<sup>36</sup> See footnote <sup>31</sup>

<sup>37</sup> See FIGURE 7.4.2. – 1.

<sup>38</sup> Loren Mead writes about this need in his book The Once and Future Church in a larger framework and it is discussed in more detail in the chapter, 5.2.1.



those who could not understand Finnish. The Finnish ministry was the one that was developed and it was effective. Inherent in this disability was our failure to see the impact of long-term events, of gradual shifts in the environment surrounding the church and of changes within the congregation itself.<sup>39</sup> With this disability we also focused on the practicalities of leadership and what we had to do to keep our part of the show going. In this way the leadership developed tunnel vision, focusing on the necessity of the immediate task and failing to take a holistic view of the community.

Systems theorists call the tendency of people in relationships to develop patterns and keep doing things in the same way, “homeostasis.” Once an organization or system gets in motion, it tends to keep going in the same way. Homeostasis is the tendency for a congregation to mold the behavior of others into predictable patterns, making it possible for us to “get along,” to function, to find safety and to trust. On the other hand, it is very important that a congregation has predictable patterns because without fixed patterns we would have no idea what is going to happen next. However, if we have too much order, too much dependability, too much status quo, then the congregation will not adapt to changes in the environment; it will inhibit the growth and development of group members (Parson and Leas 1993, 6 - 8). For our congregation the problem has been that the homeostatic forces have been almost totally in charge. One of the major functions of our ethnic congregation has been to preserve what the immigrants had experienced back in their homeland, and the forces not to change have been very strong.<sup>40</sup> The congregation environment has in many ways been there, in Finland, instead of here. The immigrants’ experience in the new and “hostile” environment has only supported the homeostatic forces of our congregation.<sup>41</sup>

Systems analysts also refer to people in systems as being “codependent.” This refers to the cooperation within the system to keep it functioning. The members of a congregation can be on one extreme too dependent and on the other end too loose (Parson and Leas 1993, 8-9). The Finnish ethnic congregation has experienced both

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<sup>39</sup> For more about the history of the congregation see section 5.1.2. “A Brief History of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thunder Bay”.

<sup>40</sup> See TABLE 7.4.3. – 1a. and section 5.1.2. “A Brief History of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thunder Bay”.

<sup>41</sup> See Edwin H. Friedman, Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue (New York: Guilford Press, 1985), passim.

extremes. On one end of the spectrum are those who were baptized in a Lutheran church back in their homeland where belonging to the folk church, for most, is very loose; they follow the same pattern here in Canada and use the church mainly for the rites of passage.<sup>42</sup> On the other end of the spectrum are those for whom the congregation not only fulfills their religious need but also serves as a safe “island” in the new homeland. For many there is a tendency to be overly codependent.<sup>43</sup>

Time for change had arrived and it was widely accepted. It all started from the concern for the future of our church. We started to visualize the future in light of the fact that there are no more immigrants coming from Finland and the primary purpose of the congregation is about to change.<sup>44</sup> On the other hand, those who were baptized and confirmed in our church were not attending our services. We agreed to a large extent that if things did not change, our church would not survive very far into the future. For most it was a challenge that they wanted to overcome, and for some the status quo was enough.

Since we realized that it was such a radical change to our present situation, it was obvious that we needed, as we said at the time, “everybody’s support”. We could not face the challenge if we had to fight against one another. We worked for over a year before making any formal decision just to get as many people as possible behind the council’s vision. It was understood that not everyone likes the new idea of a mission that also includes a relocation. It was made clear from the very beginning that we do not have to do this if the congregation or a fair number of its members are against the mission.<sup>45</sup> Hilldale Lutheran Church had gone through difficult times and the council was afraid that something similar would happen when we were dealing with much bigger plans than before. For example, the congregation was divided into two almost equal groups when it decided to buy a summer camp. The council decided to proceed very

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<sup>42</sup> See Appendix 2, section 8.2. “Why Do You Come to Church” and 9.1. “Our Congregation’s identity”.

<sup>43</sup> See section 7.4.10. “Church attendance”: “How many of your closest friends (individuals and couples) with whom you have social and recreational life are members of your congregation.” The big difference between the two language groups indicates the strong codependency of the first generation Finnish speaking members. See also Appendix 1, question 10 (1994).

<sup>44</sup> More about the history of our mission can be found in chapter 5.1.3.

<sup>45</sup> See section 7.4.12. “The Mission of Hilldale Lutheran Church” and TABLE 7.4.12. - 1.





carefully because of that experience. It is important to notice that the leadership's authority is tested through this process and that even though the bylaws may grant one vote to every person, some votes are more influential than others.<sup>46</sup>

Instead of asking the congregation to make decisions about the future, the council only asked permission to proceed with studies of different options. In this manner the council was gathering perhaps the most important source of information, the knowledge of different options and gaining a more influential voice. By purposely delaying the process, the council allowed members to be more rational instead of emotional because there was no reason to take stands. This time-delay was also important to shape the vision that was just starting to form and because we did not have any examples to follow.

The congregational leadership also tried to consider all opinions and find a solution that was more "win-win" than "win-lose". We tried to shape a future that had something to offer everyone. It became clear from the very beginning that the plan to relocate was especially painful for the older members who often commented that "this church is enough for me". The voice of the old faithful members was the seed for the plans to build a seniors' apartment complex on the same property as the new church.

Sometimes it is dangerous to use what had worked well in the past as the mandate for the future. There is another danger: too much change. In our reaction to our "stuckness," we may swing to the other extreme. Congregations, like human beings, live between the polarities of order and freedom. Between these two fundamental requirements lies the stage upon which the history of the people of God has been played out (Ibid., 21-23). We, as Finnish immigrants, are experiencing this tension within the congregation and in our personal lives as a tension between "there" and "here". One of the primary decisions that our church council made was that we wanted to take good care of our present members so that they do not feel left out because of the new ministries. We decided to keep the present pastor as the one that continued the Finnish ministries because of the existing connections and trust that were created throughout the years. Church council also

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<sup>46</sup> For other theories of authority and change, see Lyle E. Schaller, Strategies for Change (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993).



considered that if the present pastor was to be in charge of the new mission the old members might feel that they were outcast and rejected. In our case this tension was experienced not just within the congregation and its members but between the old and new members.<sup>47</sup>

Family therapists also recognize this tension and describe it as an “integration-differentiation” continuum (Ibid., 22). Sociologists call it the “assimilation-retention” or “assimilation-differentiation” paradigm. Since this tension is constantly present in congregational life, it can be seen as a healthy tension that creates and maintains internal variety, flexibility and openness to renewal. It is important to understand that there is no balance, only tension, no single right answer in polarity management terms, but polarities to manage. It is vital for the well-being of a congregation to value a good tension between polarities and the need to maintain internal variety. For an ethnic congregation this is important to notice. In addition, its leaders need to develop a consciousness about the nature of the system in which they minister.

## ***7.2. Polarity Management***

There are many theories about leadership, leadership styles and management. I proposed to use Johnson’s polarity management theory in this study as an example of applying a leadership theory to a specific situation (Johnson 1992). This theory seemed well suited for congregational use. It has been used, for example, by the Alban Institute, since it is quite easily adaptable and deals with polarities and unsolvable problems that are quite often present in congregational and religious settings.

There are strong arguments presented for and against multiculturalism and whether or not it is good for Canada. Should the “there” be considered more important than “here”? There seems to be no consensus in Canadian politics as to which way Canadians should proceed. On the other hand, congregations have followed different paths at different times in history and also largely according to their

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<sup>47</sup> For more about our mission, see section 5.1.3. “The History of the Mission of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church.”



ethnic traditions (for example, as mentioned above, Germans seem to assimilate to Canadian culture much quicker than Ukrainians and Jewish). One way to proceed could be to stop trying to solve problems that are inherently unsolvable and instead concentrate on improving skills to identify unsolvable problems and learn to manage them well. I will attempt to apply Dr. Barry Johnson's theory of polarity management to accomplish the above.

Figure 7.2.-1. Building the Assimilation/Differentiation Map

Assimilation	Differentiation
<b>L+</b> + keep the congregation alive	<b>R+</b> + maintain ethnicity and ethnic identity
<b>L-</b> - lose ethnicity and ethnic identity	<b>R-</b> - congregation will eventually diminish

The Polarity Map is represented by two poles. The left half represents one pole, in this case, Assimilation. The right half represents the other pole which, in this case, is Differentiation. Each pole, ASSIMILATION and DIFFERENTIATION, is also divided in half. The upper half of each pole represents the positive outcomes that result from focusing on that pole. These are the benefits of that pole (+). The lower half of each pole represents the negative outcomes that result from focusing only on that pole and neglecting the opposite pole. These are the disadvantages of that pole (-).

Whenever there is a push for a shift in polarity, it is because those pushing are:

1. Experiencing or anticipating the downsides of the present pole which they identify as the “problem,” (In this case, the fear that within a few years there will not be enough Finns to support the church) and,
2. They are attracted to the upsides of the other pole which they identify as the “solution.” (There is a hope that we might attract back to the church those who have been baptized and confirmed there.)

Basically, whoever encouraged moving the emphasis to English ministry and to the community was moving toward one thing and away from something else. In terms of the Table 6.4. - 1., it is easy to see why, if there are no more immigrants coming from Finland, and the average age of the members increases, the congregation would consider the primary emphasis on the (R+) upside of Differentiation, a rising “problem” and want to move away from it. At the same time, it is easy to see how the upside of Assimilation (L+) would be seen as a “solution,” and why some might want to move toward it.

Though the move from the down side of the differentiation (R-) toward the upside of the assimilation (L+) is probably a good one, and even necessary, it is not a solution. It is not a solution in any final sense as you cannot just focus on keeping the congregation alive and neglect the ethnicity and ethnic identity. Such a singular, permanent focus will result in the loss of ethnicity and ethnic identity because if you focus on keeping the congregation alive while neglecting ethnicity, the downside of assimilation occurs.

Now that we have the whole structure, we can move to the dynamics of the dilemma. The normal movement, according to Johnson’s theory, through the four quadrants can be pictured as an infinity loop ( $\infty$ ). The polarity “two-steps” start in either quadrant and move first across and up (L- to R+ or R- to L+) and down (R+ to R- or L+ to L-) and then repeat, returning to the starting point.

Polarities cannot be solved by choosing any one of the quadrants but by choosing both sides and getting the benefits of each while appreciating the limits of each. It is not a static situation but an



ongoing flow of shifting emphasis from one to the other and back again. This can be called a paradoxical relationship between the poles: in order to gain and maintain the benefits of one pole, you must also pursue the benefits of the other.

The theory of polarity management makes the important point that some problems are unsolvable and instead of trying to answer “either/or”, the theory suggests trying “both/and” thinking to solve these dilemmas effectively. In our case, it is most unlikely that the first and second generation will see the purpose or the future of the church in the same way.<sup>48</sup> That is why it might be most fruitful not to try to solve the problem with one right answer, but rather to try to manage the polarity.

### **7.3. Strategy**

Strategy is the way a congregation puts its vision into practice. This dimension could also be called mission, as it assesses the congregation’s attitude towards the future. It places the congregation in a continuum between rigidly planning for the future and being spontaneous - freely responding to the present. As is the case with all polarities, some degree of polarity is necessary and both “rigid planning” and “being spontaneous” are equally valued.

Planning the strategy enabled our congregation to develop a clear sense of purpose and direction. It took almost seven years from the first meetings in 1987 for the vision to develop into action in 1994. This careful approach was a very important part of the strategy. The church council appointed a mission committee to develop the strategy, a building committee to take care of the plans to relocate, and a fundraising committee to raise the money. Each committee had representatives from the church council to take care of the flow of

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<sup>48</sup> Even though there were no such statistics available in 1994 which would indicate the birthplace of the respondents or their parents/grandparents, our congregational study (1994) indicates that about 70% are first generation (members who were born in Finland) and 30% are second or third generation Canadians. (This assumption was based on the language of correspondence in our congregational study (1994). In more detail see chapter Seven and Appendix 2.)



information. That has actually been the most difficult part of the whole process.

The strategy was developed through preliminary planning, trying to see things in a new way, laying down the different scenarios of the future and making choices among the options. This preliminary planning, that also included the congregational study, led to decision making. The congregation studied the information that is included in this study in chapters 5, 6 and 7 for the part of 1994 survey. The actual process started after the formal decisions were made in a congregational meeting in February 1994. The mission statement was made based on the results of the congregational survey. First candidates for the position of the assistant pastor (the mission pastor) were interviewed, the process of rezoning started, an architect was hired and the contacts were made with a couple of non-profit housing corporations to proceed with the plans to build the seniors' apartment complex.

### **7.3.1. Strategy of Hilddale Lutheran Church**

The strategy of the Hilddale Lutheran church was adopted after all the information from different sources was studied and shared with the congregation in 1994<sup>49</sup>. This information included also the results of the first survey in 1994. However, in this study this chapter is placed before the results of the first survey because the purpose of the second survey in 1998 was to find out if this strategy had worked. Placing surveys, 1994 and 1998, side by side helps to study the results of the second survey.

We, as an immigrant congregation, are faced with the challenge of balancing between the two polarities: Are we heading towards a Canadian congregation that will eventually and intentionally forget its ethnic roots in the process of adaptation and assimilation, or are we heading towards the other polarity where we, as a Canadian

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<sup>49</sup> The Strategy of Hilddale Lutheran Church was also defended as a thesis at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota, USA, in 1995. Other Finnish congregations in Sault Ste. Marie and in Sudbury have used the material created in Hilddale Project. St. Mathew's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sudbury did a comprehensive study based on the same questionnaire and published its report "A Vision for the Future" in 1999 (St. Mathew's Evangelical Lutheran Church 1999). Some other congregations have also shown an interest in the project.



congregation, try intentionally to retain our ethnicity? The basic question for us as an immigrant congregation is: Towards which polarity should we be heading? In the past the emphasis has been on Canadian congregations that eventually “forget” their ethnic identity. First of all, there is no single right answer but rather polarities to manage. This tension is a vital part of the congregational system. This study (1994) supports the second option, without forgetting the management of polarities in general, we should use our ethnic identity as a positive force that will lead us to the future.

First, this study (1994) supports the idea that people affiliate with the church of their childhood and are very faithful to their affiliation with a religious denomination. This phenomenon can be used as a resource when trying to reach out to the community in a more realistic way. We are less likely to draw people from other religious bodies, but our resources will be most effectively used when we try to reach those who affiliate with our church. Faith, after all, is not something that comes suddenly or grows in isolation; it is passed on in large measure by the simple, devout faith of parents and others. Out of the many factors, one’s childhood home is one of the best predictors of later religiosity.

Secondly, ethnicity is very much a part of our identity, and the affiliation that people have with our congregation is also an affiliation with the ethnic culture and the Lutheran faith. Religion and ethnicity serve much the same needs of human beings enabling them to relate to something that is actually bigger than themselves and helping them to place themselves in a certain context. It is time to start looking at old things in new ways. For far too long, culture including ethnic culture, has been seen as the enemy, whose influence is both pervasive and negative. Now it is time to see it as an opportunity. Ethnic culture is a great resource for religion. Effective ministry for us as an immigrant congregation involves a co-opting of culture whereby the ethnic culture is utilized by religion. Our church is in a unique and enviable position. We have a ready-made and highly stable clientele because of the ethnic and religious memory. The people are there and we need to take this challenge seriously and seek them out.

Thirdly, according to what was said first, childhood plays an exceptionally important part in one’s religious future. Because of this connection an emphasis should be given to youth ministry. There are



several studies that support this basic assumption and in our particular case those studies should be taken seriously.

Finally, we should emphasize the rites of passage. Baptisms, confirmations, church weddings and funerals are not just part of the tradition of the Finnish Lutheran church, but also a significant part of the Finnish culture in general. This part of the religious memory should be kept alive and emphasized because it furthermore, creates affiliation for the next generation.

#### ***7.4. Presentation and Analysis of the Data***

The analysis of the 1994 survey data is presented here along with the 1998 follow-up survey to facilitate the comparison. The information of the 1994 survey, according to The Whitehead/Whitehead Method, was shared with the congregation at the time when they were developing the strategy. This material was studied at the Church Council, Local Advisory Group/Mission Committee and in several small groups to help to understand the special characteristics of Hilldale Lutheran Church. The second survey is compared to the data of the first survey to find out if the strategy has worked. Some of the information has already been shared with the congregation and the rest of the information (this dissertation) will be shared with the Church Council and the congregation to further develop the strategy for the future.

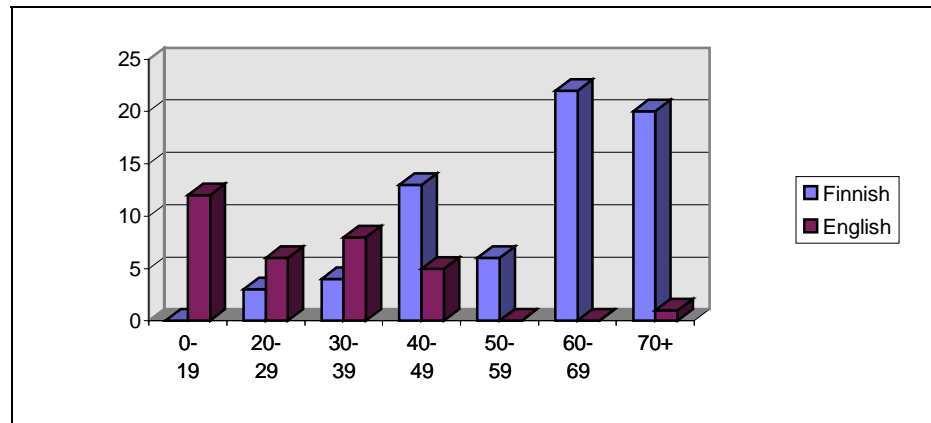
##### **7.4.1. Profile of the Congregation in 1994**

The first statistical manipulation of the data involved a frequency run of all the variables. This provided the opportunity to present a general profile of the sample of congregation under analysis. Unless otherwise stated, all were considered here in 1994 survey analysis as members because of their close affiliation to the congregation and because of the special role of Finnish ethnic congregation.





Figure 7.4.1. - 1. Age of Respondents by Language in 1994  
(In %'s)



N=100	0 - 19	20 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59	60 - 69	70+	Row Total %	Total N
<b>English</b>	38	19	25	15	0	0	3	32%	32
<b>Finnish</b>	0	4	6	19	9	32	30	68%	68
<b>Total %</b>	12%	9%	12%	18%	6%	22%	21%	100%	
<b>Total N</b>	12	9	12	18	6	22	21		100

By sex, the sample of the members was 35% male and 65% female. From those who answered in English (later referred to as English speaking only) 33% were male and 67% female, and from those who answered in Finnish (later referred to as Finnish speaking only) 36% were male and 64% female.

Out of the sample, 12% belonged to the age group 0-19 years, 9% to 20-29 years, 12% to 30-39 years, 18% to 40-49 years, 6% to 50-59 years, 22% to 60-69 years and 21% to 70 years and over. The mean age of the congregation was just under 50 years. For the English speaking, the mean age was under 30 years and for the Finnish speaking, it was over 60 years. The fact that the English speaking respondents were generally much younger than the Finnish speaking respondents means that many differences between language groups can be understood as differences between age groups and vice versa. Most of those who answered were married (60 %); 19% were singles, 14% widowed, 6% divorced and 1% other. This did not represent a



congregational average but only an average of the sample as none of the children from Sunday School (under 13 years) answered.

Most of those who answered the 1994 survey had been members for over 10 years (54 %) and out of those 34 % had been members for over 20 years. Out of the sample, 30 % had been members between 0-9 years and 16% were not members. In the category of 0-9 years, 64% were Finnish speaking but in the group of those who had been members between 10-19 years, the distribution was almost 50/50. In the category of 20 or more years of membership, everybody answered in Finnish. Compared to other sources of information (for example statistical information from our annual report to the synod) a surprisingly large percentage answered in English (30%). The total average attendance of the Finnish services in 1993 was 125 and only 22 for the English services, representing only 15% of our membership.

All variables of the first survey were crosstabulated by all the background variables; sex, age, marital status, length of membership and language of correspondence. Due to the huge amount of information (ca. 200 crosstabulation tables, property of the writer) produced by this analysis, only highlights will be discussed in this study. Crosstabulations were calculated in absolute numbers as well as in percentage by row, column and total.

#### **7.4.2. Profile of the Congregation in 1998**

The prototypical respondent of the second survey was a married female between the ages of 40-49 years; she responded in English, and had been a member of the congregation for over 20 years. Compared to the first survey things have changed a little. A prototypical respondent of the first survey was a married female between the ages of 50-59 years; she responded in Finnish and had been a member of the congregation for over 20 years. Both samples included more women 62% (65% in 1994) than men 38% (35% in 1994).



This is a biased distribution reflecting the gender distribution that attends the church. It is a common phenomena in Canada that women are usually more active in church than men. It was also quite common that households filled out only one form per family. In these cases the person most likely to fill out the survey was a woman. The same phenomenon has been common in other studies that involved Finnish immigrants and their descendants (Stoller 1996; Aho 1993-1994; Susag 1999). They suggest that women might just be more active in ethnic activities than men and more diligent in returning the completed questionnaires.

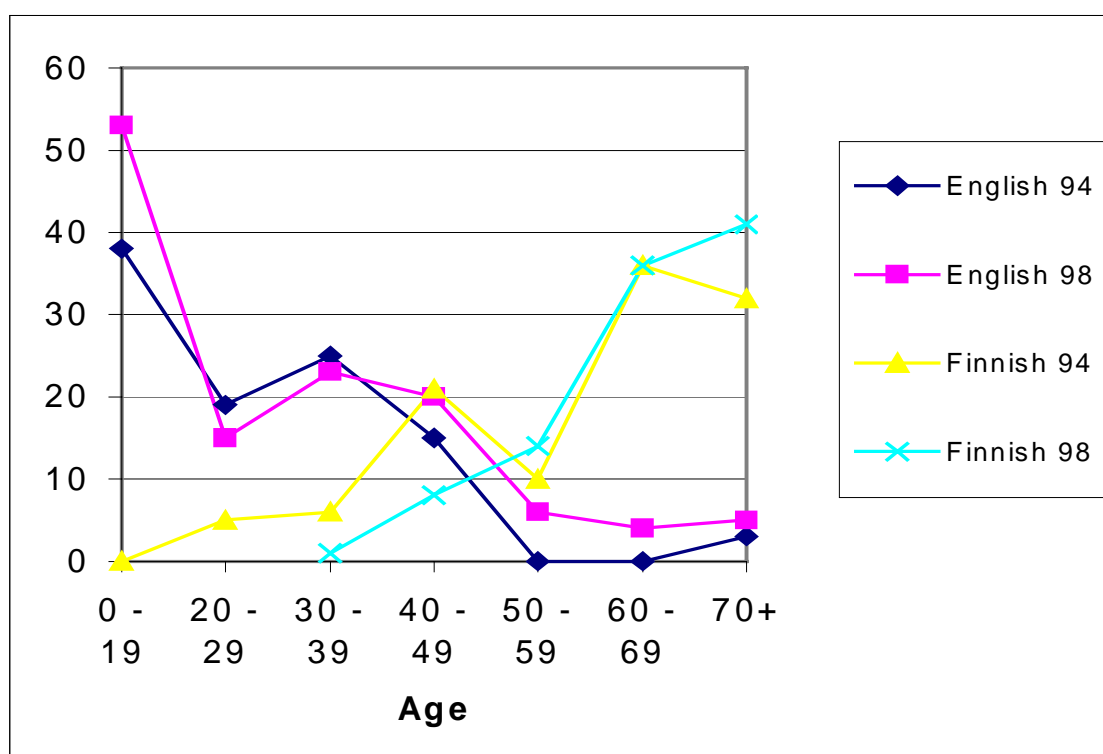
Table 7.4.2. - 1. Age<sup>50</sup> of Respondents by Language in 1998 (*In %'s*)

N=201	0 – 12 <sup>1</sup>	13 - 19	20 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59	60 - 69	70+	Row Total %	Row Total N
<b>English</b>	1	26	15	23	20	6	4	5	56%	113
<b>Finnish</b>	0	0	0	1	8	14	36	41	44%	88
<b>Total %</b>	1%	15%	9%	13%	15%	9%	18%	20%	100%	
<b>Total N</b>	1	30	17	27	30	19	36	41		201

<sup>1</sup>The number of cases in the sample is obviously insufficient to permit stable percentaging. They are included for interest value.

<sup>50</sup> For statistical analysis it might have been more interesting for overall picture to combine age groups. These age categories were formed and analyzed as such by the request of the congregation for the purpose of church activities.

Figure 7.4.2. - 1. Comparison of the Age of Respondents by Language in 1994 and 1998 (*In %'s, By Row*)



N=100(94) N=201(98)*	0 - 19	20 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59	60 - 69	70+	Total %	Total N
<b>English 94</b>	38	19	25	15	0	0	3	100	32
<b>English 98</b>	27	15	23	20	6	4	5	100	113
<b>Finnish 94</b>	0	4	6	19	9	32	30	100	68
<b>Finnish 98</b>	0	0	1	8	14	36	41	100	88

\*Age groups of 0-12 and 13-19 are combined

The instrument to measure the age of the respondents was changed from 1994 to 1998 by adding one age group to get more detailed information of those who were in confirmation school or already confirmed (TABLE 7.4.2. - 1.). Out of the sample, only 1% belonged to the youngest age group of under 12 years. The largest age group was 70+ with 20% of respondents followed by 60-69 year olds. These two groups represent 38% of the sample compared to the 1994



sample rate of 43% (TABLE 7.4.2. – 1). Age groups 20-29 and 50-59 both represent 9% of the sample in 1998. There has been an increase since the last survey in the youngest age group from 12% to 16% (two youngest age groups combined in 1998 survey). The most significant decline since the last survey has been in the numbers of respondents in the 40-49 year olds from 18% to 15% at present (FIGURE 7.4.1. – 1 and TABLE 7.4.2. – 1.). The median age group is now one group younger than in 1994, 40-49, (50-59 in 1994) but only barely. Generally, the sample was considered very reliable by Local Advisory Group/Mission Committee representing the distribution of members into different age groups excluding the youngest ones who could not or did not reply to the survey.

Table 7.4.2.-2. Language of Respondents by Membership in 1998 (*In %'s, total*)

Language N=198	Not a Member	0-3 Years	4-9 Years	10-19 Years	20 or more	Total %/N
<b>English</b>	93.9	95.2	45.8	54.3	34.9	55.8
<b>Finnish</b>	6.1	4.8	54.2	45.7	65.1	44.2
<b>Total %</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Total N</b>	33	20	24	35	86	198

One large group of English speaking respondents, proportionally of the whole congregation, were those who were not members (15%) and new members (5%). Most of the new and non-members are English speaking, 95% and 94% respectively (TABLE 7.4.2. - 2). New members are classified as those who have joined the church within the last three years, after we started the mission. It is quite likely that most of those non-members were not part of the first study. It is unlikely that the change in the number of English speaking respondents could be explained as learning phenomena. This indicates that there are more second and third generation siblings responding than before, and that English is usually their language of choice.

Half (50%) of the respondents were married. This number is down from 60% in the first survey. This is mainly because there are more respondents in the age group of 0-19 in 1998 study than in the first survey who are usually singles. Two other main groups were

singles, 26 % (20%) and widowed 15% (13%). This information corresponds well with the age distribution percentages. This sample contained 8% (6 %) divorced and 2% (2%) other, which included common-law relationships. The small difference between these two samples reflects again on the difference in age distribution.

Obviously most of the respondents were members (TABLE 7.4.2. - 2.). The majority, 42% of the members, had been members for over 20 years, followed by 17% who are from the group of 10-19 years. The third largest group, 16%, are those who did not belong to the church. This number is unchanged from 1994. Most interesting is the number of new members who have joined the church during the last three years. It is quite substantial that the growth rate is 11% over three years. This is a relatively significant growth in ELCIC, in a community that is not growing, and further considering that only 108 of 652 congregations grew over 10% in a seven year period 1987 - 1993. During the same period the number of baptized members of ELCIC had fallen by 11,019 (Kuhn 1995, 3). A small number of respondents, who did not belong to Hilddale, were members of other Lutheran, 3%, and United, 2%.

Table 7.4.2. - 3. Age of Respondents by Membership in 1998  
(In %'s, total)

Age N=199	Not a member	0-3 years	4-9 years	10-19 years	20 or more	Total %
<b>0-12<sup>1</sup></b>		9.5				1.0
<b>13-19</b>	21.2	38.1	20.8	28.5		15.1
<b>20-29</b>	21.2			11.4	5.8	8.0
<b>30-39</b>	24.3	4.8	20.8	2.9	14.0	13.6
<b>40-49</b>	24.3	14.3	8.4	14.3	11.6	14.1
<b>50-59</b>	3.0	14.3		14.3	11.6	9.5
<b>60-69</b>	3.0	4.8	29.2	14.3	25.6	18.1
<b>70+</b>	3.0	14.3	20.8	14.3	31.4	20.6
<b>Total %</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

<sup>1</sup>The number of cases in the sample is obviously insufficient to permit stable percentaging. They are included for interest value.

An interesting group in this study are those who have joined the congregation after we started the mission. As mentioned before, almost all of them are English speaking. There is almost an



equal number of male and female, 38% are under twenty, 57% under 50 and 19% over 60 (TABLE 7.4.2. - 3.). Obviously most of them are single, 48% and 33% are married. Most of them are from the new neighborhood (47%) and 71% live within 6 km. They belong to the church firstly because it is Lutheran, secondly because of Finnish Heritage, and thirdly because it is a Christian church. Those who have joined the congregation after we started the mission are in their opinions about ethical, theological and spiritual issues generally on average more from cultural left than older members<sup>51</sup>. New members are attending most regularly, 45% attend weekly, followed by those who have been members for only 4-9 years, and 44% attend weekly. The overall average attendance is 36%. More about the new members in the next chapter.

### 7.4.3. Why People Belong to This Church?

The question was asked in the 1994 survey: “Why do you belong to this church or a group?” The choices given were: “Finnish heritage (59.7%), Lutheran (55.7%), Christian (57%), Friends or other (11.3%)”. It is important to note that these options do not exclude one another but one could rank the importance of each one. Finnish heritage was considered most often as the “most important” reason (60%), followed closely by two other given choices “Lutheran” and “Christian”. There is no significant difference between these choices. In each of these categories, females considered all of them more important than males (c.a. 63/37%). The Finnish heritage is most important to the age group of 0-19 and secondly to the oldest 70 years and over. One should note that even though in the youngest age group everybody corresponded in English still 83% of that age group considered it as the “most important” reason for belonging to this church, compared to age group 30-39 in which only 36% consider “Finnish heritage” as the “most important” reason. One can say that the new and younger members of our congregation speak English and join our church because of the Finnish heritage, but more likely they join our congregation because of their parents’ affiliation. Generally,

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<sup>51</sup> Terminology used by Tex Sample, U.S. Lifestyles and Mainline Churches: A Key to Reaching People in the 90's (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990), passim. Cultural left = “liberal”; Cultural right = “conservative”.



for the English speaking, “Finnish heritage” is not quite as important as for the Finnish (26/34%), the youngest age group is the exception. If we count also the option “Somewhat Important,” the two language groups are quite close to each other (46/54%).

Table 7.4.3. – 1a. Belonging to This Church Because of the Finnish Heritage by Age in 1994 (*In %'s*)

N=65	0-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59 <sup>1</sup>	60-69	70+	Row Total %/N
<b>Most Important</b>	83.3	62.5	36.4	41.7	50	66.7	77.8	60 .0
<b>Somewhat Important</b>	16.7	37.5	63.6	58.3	50	22.2	22.2	38.5
<b>Not Important</b>	0	0	0	0	0	11.1	0	1.5
<b>Total %</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Total N</b>	12	8	11	12	4	9	9	65

<sup>1</sup>The number of cases in the sample is obviously insufficient to permit stable percentaging. They are included for interest value.

Lutheranism was considered in the first survey more often as the “most important” reason for belonging to this congregation in the age groups of 60-69 years and 70 years and up than in the other age groups. If we combine the two choices, “most important” and “somewhat important,” the highest average is in the age group of 40-49 years and the lowest in 50-59 years. For the new members (0-9 years), Lutheran identity is more important than in the other groups. Fifty per cent of the English speaking consider “Lutheran” as the most important reason for their belonging to the church and 56% of the Finnish speaking. Being a Christian, church is considered “not important” in both language groups by 50% of the respondents, compared to “Lutheran” that is considered “most important” or “somewhat important” by everyone in each group. A cautious conclusion was made that out of the options that were given in the questionnaire, our members affiliated with “Finnish” and “Lutheran.”





Table 7.4.3. – 1b. Belonging to This Church Because of the Finnish Heritage by Age in 1998 (*In %'s*)

Finnish Heritage N=202	0-12 <sup>1</sup>	13-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+	Total %/N
<b>Agree Strongly</b>		26.7	47.0	40.8	50.0	47.4	33.3	56.1	42.6
<b>Agree Moderately</b>	50.0	53.3	23.5	44.4	23.3	31.6	5.6	4.9	24.7
<b>Disagree Moderately</b>		3.3	5.9	3.7		5.2	2.8		2.5
<b>Disagree Strongly</b>			11.8	3.7					1.5
<b>Don't Know</b>	50.0	16.7	11.8	7.4	26.7	15.8	58.3	39.0	28.7
<b>Total %</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Total N</b>	2	30	17	27	30	19	36	41	202

<sup>1</sup>The number of cases in the sample is obviously insufficient to permit stable percentaging. They are included for interest value.

In the second survey the respondents were given one more option, "Because my family comes here". The scale was also expanded from three choices to five. Like in the 1994 survey, the options did not exclude one another but respondents were able to rank each question from "Agree Strongly" to "Disagree Strongly". Things have changed a little from the 1994 study. Belonging to Hilldale Lutheran Church because it is a "Christian Church" was considered most often the most important reason (50.0%), followed by "Lutheran" (49.5%), "Finnish Heritage" (42.6%), "Family" (29.2%) and Friends (7.9%). If two positive answers "Agree Strongly" and "Agree Moderately" are combined the order is little different, "Lutheran" (76.7%), "Finnish Heritage" (67.4%), "Christian" (67.3%), "Family" (46.5%) and "Friends" (22.3%). Over all the order why respondents say that they belong to this church is "Lutheran", "Christian" and "Finnish Heritage". There is no significant difference between the top three choices and the order can be considered as a trend only.

Belonging to Hilldale Lutheran Church because it is "Lutheran" is most important in older age groups, 60-69 years (69%) and 70+ years (66%) but only 23% in the 13-19 year age group. However, if the two positive answers are combined, belonging to this church because it



is "Lutheran" is most common in age groups 30-39 (85%), 50-59 (84%), 20-29 (82%) and least important in age groups 13-19 (70%) and 70+ (73%). The length of membership has a statistically significant correlation to belonging to Hilldale because it is a Lutheran church (-.191\*\*) <sup>52</sup>. The trend is that long time members belong to Hilldale more often because of "Lutheran" than new members and those who are not members. There is no significant correlation between belonging to this church because it is "Lutheran" and any other independent background variable.

Overall the second most important reason for belonging to Hilldale Lutheran Church, "Because it is a Christian church", is considered the most important reason in the 30-39 year age group (81%, two positive answers combined) followed by 40-49 (80%) and 20-29 (77%). Belonging to Hilldale because it is a Christian church is considered the most important for oldest members for over 20 years and when the two positive answers are combined, by members for 4-9 years. This reason is least common in the new members' category, 0-3 years. There is no significant correlation between belonging to this church because it is Christian and any other independent background variable.

Finnish heritage was considered most important in the age group of 70 years and over (56%). If two positive answers are combined, it was considered highest in the 30-39 year category (85%), members for 10-19 years (86%) and the least important reason in the age group of 60-69 year (39%), and not a member category (49%). There is a correlation between belonging to this church because of Finnish heritage and language (.141\*) <sup>53</sup>, age (.156\*) and years of membership (.215\*\*). This second study confirms the first study that Finnish heritage is important for the younger, English speaking and new members.

Belonging to Hilldale Lutheran Church because of family is considered the most important reason in the 20-29 years age group (65%) followed by 10-19 years (47%) and 30-39 years (41%). In the new members, 0-3 years category family is the least important factor (14%) of belonging to Hilldale Lutheran Church and most common for

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<sup>52</sup> \*\* Significant at 0.01 level, 2-tailed. All correlations in this study are Pearson's bivariate and 2-tailed.

<sup>53</sup> \* Significant at 0.05 level, 2-tailed



members for 10-19 years (37%). There is a significant correlation between belonging to this church because of family and language (.401\*\*) and age (.527\*\*). It can be considered quite natural that family reasons are more important for younger and usually English speaking than older Finnish speaking.

The least important reason for belonging to this congregation is friends. It is most important for 20-29 year olds (24%), members for 4-9 years (29%) and 10-19 years (29%), and least important for 30-39 years age group (4%) and new members (5%). The reason for belonging to Hilldale Lutheran Church because of friends has a strong correlation with language (.252\*\*) and age (.352\*\*). Belonging because of friend is important for younger English speaking.

#### **7.4.4. Why Do People Come to Hilldale Lutheran Church?**

In the 1994 survey the respondents were given three choices and open “other” to the question “Why do you come to our church?” The three choices were “Spiritual Guidance”, “Fellowship” and “Inner Purpose”. Definitely the most important reason for the sample as a whole was the “Spiritual Guidance” that was considered the “most important”<sup>54</sup> reason for coming to church by 72%, “Inner Purpose” by 59% and “Fellowship” by 17%. For female members “Fellowship” was a more important reason than for males. The two other, “Spiritual Guidance” and “Inner Purpose”, scored equally high for males. “Spiritual Guidance” was more likely to be the reason for coming to church for the older members and “Fellowship” the reason for the younger respondents. “Inner Purpose” was highly valued in the age group of 40-49 years. In the language category Finnish speaking came to church more because of “Spiritual Guidance” whereas the English speaking came to church more because of the “Fellowship” and “Inner Purpose”.

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<sup>54</sup> In the Finnish questionnaire the option “most important” is translated “erittäin tärkeä” which literally means “very important” but can be considered as the normal option in Finnish studies which very seldom use “most important” (“kärkein tärkein”).



Table 7.4.4. – 1a. Coming to Church for Spiritual Guidance by Age in 1994 (*In %'s, By Column*)

N=83	0-19	20-21	30-39	40-49	50-59 <sup>1</sup>	60-69	70+	Row Total %/N
<b>Most important</b>	58.3	33.3	54.5	73.3	50.0	93.3	100.0	72.3
<b>Somewhat important</b>	25.0	66.7	45.5	26.7	25.0	6.7		24.1
<b>Not important</b>	16.7				25.0			3.6
<b>Total %</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Total N</b>	12	9	11	15	4	15	17	83

<sup>1</sup>The number of cases in the sample is obviously insufficient to permit stable percentaging. They are included for interest value.

In the above table (7.4.4. – 1a.) percentages have been calculated by column which makes it easier to compare age groups to one and other. TABLE 7.4.4. - 1b is an example in which the percentages have been calculated by each column. This way of calculating makes it easier to see the differences within the age groups.

After studying the data from the first congregational study, the mission statements of other Finnish Lutheran congregations and the history of our congregation, we developed the following mission statement:

We are originally a Finnish Lutheran Congregation with a strong history and sense of independence and still follow the “Folk Church” tradition of being open and willing to serve everybody.



Table 7.4.4. - 1b. Coming to Church for Spiritual Guidance by Age in 1994 (*In %'s, By Column*)

N=83	0-19	20-21	30-39	40-49	50-59 <sup>1</sup>	60-69	70+	Row Total %/N
Most important	58.3	33.3	54.5	73.3	50.0	93.3	100	72.3
Somewhat important	25.0	66.7	45.5	26.7	25.0	6.7		24.1
Not important	16.7				25.0			3.6
<b>Total %</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Total N</b>	12	9	11	15	4	15	17	83

<sup>1</sup>The number of cases in the sample is obviously insufficient to permit stable percentaging. They are included for interest value.

For the second survey in 1998, respondents were given more choices to the question: "Why do they come to church?": "For Spiritual Guidance", "For Fellowship", "To Find Inner Purpose", "To Bring Children to Sunday School" and "Because Children are in Confirmation School". The scale was also extended from three choices to five: "Agree Strongly", "Agree Moderately", "Disagree Moderately", "Disagree Strongly" and "Don't Know/Not Sure". "Spiritual Guidance" was again considered the most important reason for coming to church as 59% "Agreed Strongly" and 22% "Agreed Moderately". "Inner Purpose" is still the second most important reason for coming to church, 32% "Agreed Strongly" and 20% "Agreed Moderately". In 1994 17% considered "Fellowship" as "Most Important" reason to come to church and in 1998 24% "Agreed strongly. This small increase could be understood as there were more younger respondents and those who responded in English.



Table 7.4.4. - 2. Coming to Church for Spiritual Guidance by Age in 1998 (*In %'s, Total*).

N=202	0-12 <sup>1</sup>	13-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+	Row Total %/N
<b>Agree</b>			47.1	44.4	70.0	73.7	83.4	82.9	58.9
<b>Strongly Agree</b>		53.3	35.2	40.7	20.0	15.8	8.3		22.3
<b>Moderately Disagree</b>		13.4							2.0
<b>Moderately Disagree</b>			11.8	3.7					1.5
<b>Strongly Don't know</b>	100.0	33.3	5.9	11.2	10.0	10.5	8.3	17.1	15.3
<b>Not Sure</b>									
<b>Total N</b>	2	30	17	27	30	19	36	41	202

<sup>1</sup>The number of cases in the sample is obviously insufficient to permit stable percentaging. They are included for interest value.

"Spiritual Guidance" still becomes more and more important as people get older and "Fellowship" is more important for younger generations (SEE below what has been said about language groups). A cautious notion, because the scales are different, can be made that "Fellowship" has become more important in three of the oldest age groups since 1994. Similarly "Spiritual Guidance" has become more important reason to come to church among 13 - 49 year old respondents. "Inner Purpose" was valued highest in 20 - 29 age group, 44%, (40-49 age group had the highest value in 1994) and highly in other younger, under 50, age groups.

For this second survey, we also wanted to know how many came to church to bring their children/grandchildren to Sunday school or Confirmation school. Five percent of respondents "Agreed Strongly" that bringing their children to Sunday school was the reason why they came to church and 10% came to bring their children to Confirmation school.

For the new members who have joined the congregation after we started the mission, i.e. members for 0-3 years, "Spiritual



Guidance" is the most important reason to come to church. If the two positive answers, "Agree Strongly and Moderately" are combined, "Fellowship" is the most important reason and it is more important only to the members over 20 years. "Inner Purpose" is the third important reason. Out of all respondents, the new members come to church proportionally most often because they bring their children to confirmation.

There is a significant correlation between those who responded in Finnish (SEE above what has been said about age groups) and those who come to church for "Spiritual Guidance" (-.294\*\*). Those who prefer "Spiritual Guidance" are more likely to prefer "Lutheran" more than any other reason for belonging to this church, or vice versa. There is also a significant correlation between being interested in "Spirituality" and wanting to participate in "Bible studies" (.589\*\*), and also thinking that "Preaching the gospel in a traditional way" is the mission of the church (.369\*\*).

English speaking tend to be coming to church most often for "Fellowship" (.236\*\*) and vice versa. There is a significant correlation between people who come to church mainly because of "Fellowship" and those who belong to this church because of "Finnish heritage" (.423\*\*) and also, not surprisingly, because of "Friends come here" (.421\*\*). There is also a significant correlation between those who come to church for "Fellowship" and those who are likely to come "to find inner purpose" (.470\*\*), "bring children to Sunday School" (.296\*\*) and "children are in confirmation School" (.253\*\*). Thinking of one's life span, it is quite understandable that those who are looking for inner purpose are also looking for friends and vice versa.

There is a significant correlation between purpose driven respondents and those who belong most often to this church because it is a "Christian church" (.393\*\*). It is questionable to try to compare the 1994 and 1998 surveys because of the difference in the questions. I just want to bring up as a reference that this correlation has remained about the same since the 1994 survey (.400\*\*). Other correlations between those who come to church for "Inner Purpose" and for belonging to church are "Friends" (.315\*\*), "Family" (.292\*\*), "Finnish heritage" (.276\*\*) and "Lutheran" (.259\*\*).



#### 7.4.5. What Do People Think Is the Mission of Hilledale Lutheran Church?

In this question the same four choices were given in 1994 and 1998 surveys: a.) Preaching the gospel in a traditional way; b.) To reach those not regularly attending services; c.) To be involved in social issues such as world hunger, poverty, rainforests; d.) To be involved in local community services, such as the Lutheran Community Care Center.

Table 7.4.5. – 1a. Mission of the Church in 1994 (In %'s, By Column).

1994	Preaching Gospel	Reach Out	Global Social Issues	Community Service
Most important	68.2	51.4	26.7	33.9
Somewhat important	31.8	38.6	45.0	58.0
Not important	0.0	10.0	28.3	8.1
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 7.4.5. – 1b. Mission of the Church in 1998 (In %'s, By Column).

1998	Preaching Gospel	Reach Out	Global Social Issues	Community Service
Agree	61.5	34.5	17.5	31.5
Strongly Agree	25.5	29.0	34.0	34.5
Moderately Disagree	2.5	7.5	9.0	2.5
Moderately Disagree	0.0	2.5	.5	1.0
Strongly Don't Know/ Not Sure	10.5	26.5	39.0	30.5
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0





In the 1994 survey “Preaching the gospel” (68.2%) and “Reaching out” (51.4%) were considered to be the most important missions of the church (TABLE 7.4.5. – 1a.). These missions of the church remained at the top of the list also in 1998 (61.5% and 34.5%). The difference could be explained partly because of the difference in the scale.

Table 7.4.5. – 2a. Mission of the Church is Preaching the Gospel in a Traditional Way by Age in 1994 (*In %'s, By Column*).

N=88	0-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50 - 59 <sup>1</sup>	60-69	70+	Row Total %
<b>Most important</b>	66.7	44.4	58.3	62.5	80.0	66.7	93.7	68.2
<b>Somewhat important</b>	33.3	55.6	41.7	37.5	20.0	33.3	6.3	31.8
<b>Not important</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Total %</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100	100.0
<b>Total N</b>	12	9	12	16	5	18	16	88

<sup>1</sup>The number of cases in the sample is obviously insufficient to permit stable percentaging. They are included for interest value.

"Preaching the gospel in a traditional way" is still considered overall as the most important mission of the church. Even though the scales are different in these two studies one can say that the most significant decline is in the age group of 19 and under and cautiously also generally. This type of mission is not as important for new members (membership for 3 years and under) than for those who have been members for over 20 years. 40% of new members agree strongly compared to 78% of longtime members. 30% of the new members answer that they don't know or are not sure compared to 7% of members over 20 years. Language (-.310\*\*) and age (-.286\*\*) has a negative correlation with "Preaching gospel in a traditional way" which means that Finnish speaking agree more strongly with "Preaching gospel in a traditional way" than English speaking and older more than younger. This vision of mission has a significant correlation with those who come to church for spiritual guidance (.369\*\*) and purpose (.218\*\*). There is a significant positive correlation between the mission of the church is "preaching gospel" and thinking that "reaching out" is the mission of the church (.265\*\*)



but negative correlation with "homosexuality is an acceptable lifestyle" (-.194\*\*). Those who agree that "preaching the gospel is the mission of the church" are also likely to agree strongly with the traditional Christian statements in question 12, like "Jesus is the divine Son of God". There is also a correlation between "preaching the gospel" and attending church weekly (.169\*) and having been baptized at Finnish/Hilldale Lutheran Church (.143\*). These correlations are quite logical and confirm that respondents are loyal to their opinions being it cultural left, right or middle<sup>51</sup>. Regular attendees seem to be more from cultural right (conservative).

Table 7.4.5. - 2.b. Mission of the Church is Preaching the Gospel in a Traditional Way by Age in 1998 (*In %'s, By Column*).

N=200	0-19*	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+	Row Total
<b>Agree Strongly</b>	12.9	50.0	33.3	70.0	84.2	83.3	85.4	61.5
<b>Agree Moderately</b>	51.6	50.0	55.6	23.3	10.5	5.6	2.4	25.5
<b>Disagree Moderately</b>	9.6	0.0	3.7	0.0	5.3	0.0	0.0	2.5
<b>Disagree Strongly</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Don't Know/ Not Sure</b>	25.9	0.0	7.4	6.7	0.0	11.1	12.2	10.5
<b>Total %</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Total N</b>	31	16	27	30	19	36	41	200

\*Age groups of 0-12 and 13-19 are combined



Table 7.4.5. – 3a. Mission of the Church Is to Reach to Those Not Regularly Attending Services by Age in 1994 (*In %'s, By Column*).

N=70	0-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59 <sup>1</sup>	60-69	70+	Row Total
<b>Most Important</b>	33.3	42.8	36.4	46.7	50.0	71.4	85.7	51.4
<b>Somewhat important</b>	58.3	28.6	54.5	33.3	50.0	28.6	14.3	38.6
<b>Not important</b>	8.4	28.6	9.1	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0
<b>Total %</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Total N</b>	12	7	11	15	4	14	7	70

<sup>1</sup>The number of cases in the sample is obviously insufficient to permit stable percentaging. They are included for interest value.

Table 7.4.5. - 3b. Mission of the Church Is to Reach to Those Not Regularly Attending Services by Age in 1998 (*In %'s, By Column*)

N=200	0-19*	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+	Row Total
<b>Agree</b>	6.5	37.5	18.5	53.3	42.1	47.2	36.6	34.5
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	51.6	31.2	37.0	30.0	36.8	19.4	9.7	29.0
<b>Moderately Disagree</b>	12.9	25.0	26.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.5
<b>Moderately Disagree</b>	21.9	0.0	0.0	3.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5
<b>Strongly Don't Know/ Not Sure</b>	16.1	6.3	18.5	13.3	21.1	33.4	53.7	26.5
<b>Total %</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Total N</b>	31	16	27	30	19	36	41	200

\*Age groups of 0-12 and 13-19 are combined

There has been a small change in attitude towards the importance of "reaching out" as the mission of the church (TABLES 7.4.5. – 1a. and 1b.). It seems that it is not considered as important as



when we started the mission. One reason could be that the mission of the Hilldale Lutheran Church has not been easy. Another reason could simply be the different layout and more options in this second questionnaire. Finnish speaking (51%) are more likely than English speaking (21%) to agree strongly that reaching out to those not regularly attending services is the mission of the church. There is a significant correlation between agreeing strongly with the reach out statement and belonging to this church or group because of "Finnish heritage" (.305\*\*), "Lutheran" (.210\*\*) and because this is a "Christian church" (.337\*\*).

Global issues are considered least often as the most important ("Agree Strongly" in 1998) mission of the church in both studies, 26.7% in 1994 and 17.5% in 1998 (Tables 7.4.5. - 1a and 1b). It is interesting to note that in 1998 the correlation between statement that mission of the church is to be involved in "global social issues" and belonging to this church because of "family" (.429\*\*) and "friends" (.487\*\*) is stronger than "Finnish heritage" (.354\*\*), "Lutheran" (.138\*) or "Christian tradition" (.288\*\*). These same people for whom global issues are important are most often likely to come to church for fellowship (.455\*\*), to find inner purpose (.369\*\*) and bring children to Sunday School (.304\*\*) or Confirmation School (.259\*\*) or vice versa.

Global social issues were considered more important in 1994 survey by longtime members than other groups. In the follow-up study, there is hardly any difference between the membership categories. The exception are quite high percentage of those who "Don't Know/Not Sure" in the two oldest age groups, 61.1% and 78.0%, which is quite understandable (TABLES 7.4.5. -4a. and 4b.). Generally mission is not considered a high priority in any membership or age group.



Table 7.4.5. – 4a. Mission of the Church is to Be Involved in Global Social Issues by Age in 1994 (*In %'s, By Column*)

	0-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50 -59 <sup>1</sup>	60-69	70+	Row Total %
N=60								
Most important	25.0	14.3	20.0	8.3	60.0	40.0	50.0	26.7
Somewhat important	58.3	28.6	50.0	50.0	0.0	60.0	25.0	45.0
Not important	16.7	57.1	30.0	41.7	40.0	0.0	25.0	28.3
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total N	12	7	10	12	5	10	4	60

<sup>1</sup>The number of cases in the sample is obviously insufficient to permit stable percentaging. They are included for interest value.

Table 7.4.5. – 4b. Mission of the Church is to Be Involved in Global Social Issues by Age in 1998 (*In %'s, By Column*)

	0-19*	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+	Row Total %
N=200								
Agree	12.9	37.5	18.5	20.0	15.8	16.7	12.2	17.5
Strongly Agree	41.9	50.0	48.2	60.0	31.6	19.4	7.4	34.0
Moderately Disagree	29.1	6.2	3.7	6.7	15.8	2.8	2.4	9.0
Moderately Disagree	0.0	0.0	3.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	.5
Strongly Don't Know/ Not Sure	16.1	6.3	25.9	13.3	36.8	61.1	78.0	39.0
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total N	31	16	27	30	19	36	41	200

\*Age groups of 0-12 and 13-19 are combined

Local community ministries are considered more important in the follow-up study than the global issues (TABLES 7.4.5. – 4a. and 4b.). This local community involvement is considered “most



important” in the age groups of under 39 years and among the English speaking. It is important to notice, however, that the first two objectives, “Preaching the gospel” and “Reaching out” are considered at least twice as important in almost all categories than the other two, “Global social issues” and “Community services.” According to this group of questions, our congregation can be considered very traditional or, rather, very unconventional compared to the general picture of Lutheran Churches in Canada and the emphasis in the national church programs.

Table 7.4.5. – 5a. Mission of the Church Is to Be Involved in Local Social Services by Age in 1994 (*In %'s, By Column*)

N=62	0-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59 <sup>1</sup>	60-69	70+	Row Total %
<b>Most important</b>	41.7	14.3	54.5	15.4	50.0	36.4	25.0	33.9
<b>Somewhat important</b>	50.0	85.7	36.4	61.5	50.0	63.6	75.0	58.1
<b>Not important</b>	8.3	0.0	9.1	23.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.1
<b>Total %</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Total N</b>	12	7	11	13	4	11	4	62

<sup>1</sup>The number of cases in the sample is obviously insufficient to permit stable percentaging. They are included for interest value.



Table 7.4.5. - 5b. Mission of the Church Is to Be Involved in Local Social Services by Age in 1998 (*In %'s, By Row*)

N=200	0-19*	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+	Row Total %
<b>Agree Strongly</b>	29.1	56.2	25.9	40.0	26.3	27.8	26.8	31.5
<b>Agree Moderately</b>	48.4	31.2	48.1	50.0	42.1	22.2	12.2	34.5
<b>Disagree Moderately</b>	6.5	6.3	3.7	3.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5
<b>Disagree Strongly</b>	3.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.3	0.0	0.0	1.0
<b>Don't Know/ Not Sure</b>	13.3	6.3	22.3	6.7	26.3	50.0	61.0	30.5
<b>Total %</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Total N</b>	31	16	27	30	19	36	41	200

\*Age groups of 0-12 and 13-19 are combined

The specialties of Hilldale Lutheran Church in ministry include outdoor ministry, evangelism through cable television and memorial coffees. Through these ministries they serve the larger community in Thunder Bay. The Mission Committee agreed that the congregation should continue these ministries and at the same time want to be sensitive to the emotional, spiritual and physical needs of the community. In general this group understands that the mission of the church is to proclaim God's love in word and deed through witness, service and fellowship.



#### 7.4.6. Attitude towards Selected Ethical, Theological and Spirituality Issues

The respondents were asked about attitudes in certain moral and ethical issues: female ordination, homosexuality, abortion and euthanasia. In the second survey the respondents were also asked about their attitude towards unmarried living together. Adding "Agree Moderately" and "Disagree Moderately" in 1998 survey spread the scale. Often attitudes towards these ethical issues are considered to measure where people stand culturally: right, left or middle. With these questions, we wanted to find out what the members and other respondents think and if there is a pattern that could be found. With this set of questions the Mission Committee wanted to get more information about those who affiliate with Hilddale Lutheran Church in order to develop the congregational ministries.

Table 7.4.6. - 1. Attitude towards Accepting Female Ordination by Membership in 1998 (*By Column*)

N=196	Not a member	0-3 years	4-9 years	10-19 years	20 or more	Row Total %	Row Total N
<b>Agree Strongly</b>	60.6	65.0	62.5	65.7	54.7	59.6	118
<b>Agree Moderately</b>	24.2	15.0	4.2	22.9	17.4	17.7	35
<b>Disagree Moderately</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.9	0.0	.5	1
<b>Disagree Strongly</b>	0.0	5.0	12.5	5.7	9.3	7.1	14
<b>Don't know/ Not Sure</b>	15.2	15.0	20.8	2.9	18.6	15.2	30
<b>Total %</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
<b>Total N</b>	33	20	24	35	86		196





In the 1994 survey, it was surprising, because congregation considered itself quite traditional, that most (72%) of the members accepted female ordination and only 10% did not (TABLE 7.4.6. - 2.). In the 1998 survey, 77% agreed (strongly or moderately) and 8% disagreed (strongly or moderately) (TABLE 7.4.6. - 1.). What was even more surprising in 1994 was that it was accepted more often in all of the age groups of 40 years and over than in the younger age groups. The second survey indicates a change as younger agree more often than older age groups. Interestingly enough those who were not members in 1994 were most strongly against female ordination. According to the 1998 study the group of strongest opponents are now the members for 4-9 years (21%), this could be partly the same group of members. English speaking favored female ordination over Finnish speaking (73.9/69.7%) in 1994 but it was also opposed more often by English speaking (12.3/9.1%). In 1998 English speaking favored female ordination over Finnish speaking (87.5/63.6%) and were less against it (1.8/14.7%).

Table 7.4.6. - 2. Attitude towards Selected Ethical Issues by Language in 1994 and 1998 (*In %'s*)

N=(1994/1998)	Finnish -'94	English -'94	Total 1994	Finnish -'98*	English -'98*	Total 1998*
<b>Female ordination is acceptable</b> N=98/200	69.7	73.8	<b>72.4</b>	63.6	87.5	<b>77.0</b>
<b>Homosexuality is an acceptable lifestyle</b> N=90/200	33.3	3.5	<b>14.4</b>	5.7	40.2	<b>25.0</b>
<b>Abortion should not be allowed</b> N=94/200	42.4	50.8	<b>47.9</b>	21.6	41.9	<b>33.0</b>
<b>We have a right to end our own life</b> N=87/200	21.9	10.9	<b>14.9</b>	14.8	30.4	<b>23.5</b>

\*Agree Strongly and Agree Moderately combined

Table 7.4.6. – 3a. Homosexuality Is an Acceptable Lifestyle by Age in 1994 (*In %'s, Total*)

N=86	0-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+	Row Total %
<b>Agree</b>	50.0	57.1	8.3	6.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	14.0
<b>Disagree</b>	25.0	28.6	50.0	73.3	50.0	70.6	78.9	59.3
<b>Don't Know</b>	25.0	14.3	41.7	20.0	50.0	29.4	21.1	26.7
<b>Total %</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Total N</b>	12	7	12	15	4	17	19	86

Homosexuality is not as commonly accepted at Hilddale Lutheran Church as female ordination; only 14% in 1994 and 25% (Agree Strongly and Agree Moderately combined) in 1998 agreed that homosexuality is an acceptable lifestyle (TABLE 7.4.6. – 2.). There has been probably a change from 1994 till 1998 towards these issues. Homosexuality is an issue where young and old differ radically. In 1994 study half of those under 19 years and 57% of those between 20-29 accepted it, whereas no one over 50 years accepted the lifestyle (TABLE 7.4.6. – 3a.). In 1998 20% of those under 19 years, 31% of those between 20-29 agree strongly and no one in age group 50-59 agrees strongly (TABLE 7.4.6. – 3b.). Most strongly agree members for 10-19 years and disagree members for 4-9 years. From those who consider homosexuality as an acceptable lifestyle 85/90% ('94/'98<sup>55</sup>) are English speaking but only 15/10% Finnish speaking. Compared to PROJECT CAN85 Hilddale Lutheran Church seems to be much more conservative, on the right, than Canadian Lutherans in general. From 1994 to 1998, there has been a shift at Hilddale Lutheran Church in attitudes towards cultural left. According to the PROJECT CAN85 statistical information, an average of 73% of the Lutherans agrees that "Homosexuals are entitled to the same rights as other Canadians." This question has a little bit of a different meaning and is not as strong a divider as the one that was used in this survey, and maybe this explains the small difference which could also be statistical (Bibby 1987: 157).

<sup>55</sup> The 1998 study questionnaire included two positive options: Agree Strongly and Agree Moderately. For comparison to 1994 study, which had only one option, "Agree", these two positive options were combined.



According to more recent PROJECT CAN90, 34 percent of all Canadians approve homosexual relations and 81 percent approve same rights to them as to others. (Bibby 1993: 199)

Table 7.4.6. - 3b. Homosexuality Is an Acceptable Lifestyle by Age Group in 1998 (*In %'s, By Column*)

N=200	0-19*	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+	Row Total %
<b>Agree</b>	19.4	31.3	14.8	13.3	0.0	2.8	2.4	10.5
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	25.8	18.8	25.9	20.0	21.1	2.8	0.0	14.5
<b>Moderately Disagree</b>	16.1	18.8	18.5	30.0	15.8	11.1	9.8	16.5
<b>Moderately Disagree</b>	12.9	25.0	25.9	26.7	52.6	58.3	41.5	35.5
<b>Strongly Don't know/ Not Sure</b>	25.8	6.3	14.8	10.0	10.5	25.0	46.3	23.0
<b>Total %</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Total N</b>	30	16	27	30	19	36	41	200

\*Age groups of 0-12 and 13-19 are combined

Abortion is accepted by 52% of the males and 38% of the females. It is accepted more often in the age groups of 39 years and younger. A minority (14.9%) of the respondents in 1994 survey did not support the idea that individuals have the right to end their own lives. In 1998 survey there is only 23.5% of those who think that individuals have the right to end their own lives. It is interesting to notice that in this matter the moral views of the members are now within national averages as described in PROJECT CAN85. Again, depending on how the question is asked, the national averages vary between 48% and 88% (Bibby 1987, 162). Younger people are more often in favor of having the right to end our own life than respondents of 40 years and older and Finnish speaking are more against it. According to this section of ethical questions, younger respondents and the English speaking are more from the cultural left and the older and the Finnish speaking from the right.<sup>51</sup>



#### 7.4.7. Religious Faith, Christian Belief, and Christian Experience

In this part of the second survey we wanted to know what our affiliates believe and what kind of religious experiences have they had. We used some of the same questions as were used in a national survey by G.A.Rawlyk (1996, 50-126). The same questions were used to be able to compare this congregation to the general response of Canadians and Lutherans living across Canada. When Rawlyk asked to respond to statement "My religious faith is very important to me in my day-to-day life," 36 percent of Canadians strongly agreed, 30 per cent moderately agreed, 17 percent disagreed moderately, 16 percent disagreed strongly, and 1 percent "did not know" (Rawlyk 1996, 50-52). All Canadians were included in this survey, Christians and non-Christians alike.

Table 7.4.7. - 1. Importance of Religious Faith: Comparison of Hilldale (1998) and National (Rawlyk) (*In %'s*)

"My religious faith is very important to me in my day-to-day life."  
(Same question on both studies)

	<b>Hilldale Lutheran Church</b>	<b>National, Lutheran/Presbyterian</b>
<b>Agree Strongly</b>	49	42
<b>Agree Moderately</b>	31	31
<b>Disagree Moderately</b>	7	17
<b>Disagree Strongly</b>	2	10
<b>Don't know/Not sure</b>	11	1
<b>Total %</b>	100%	100%

When compared to Rawlyk's study, 42% of Lutheran/Presbyterian agreed strongly with the statement "My religious faith is very important to me in my day-to-day life," 31% agreed moderately, 17% disagreed moderately, 10% disagreed strongly, and 1% "did not know" (TABLE 7.4.7. - 1.). In the 1998 survey 49 percent of our respondents agreed strongly, 32% moderately



agreed, 7% disagreed moderately, 2% disagreed strongly, and 11% "did not know" (TABLE 7.4.7. - 2.). According to Rawlyk's national study Lutheran/Presbyterian who attended weekly or monthly, 72% agreed strongly, 23 percent agreed moderately, 4 percent disagreed moderately, and 1 percent disagreed strongly.

Interestingly enough these national observations are very close to the profile of Hilldale Lutheran Church (see TABLE 7.4.7. - 1.). In all of the questions of this set, there is a similar difference when comparing Hilldale Lutheran Church and the national study between weekly, monthly and occasional attendees. This speaks also in favor of the reliability of this study. On some of the questions national data was not available on weekly/monthly attendees. On those cases overall response of Lutheran/Presbyterian was used for comparison.

Table 7.4.7. - 2. Importance of Religious Faith (1998):  
Attendance Perspective (*In %'s, By Row*).

"My religious faith is very important to me in my day-to-day life."

Attendance N=197	Agree Strongly	Agree Moderately	Disagree Moderately	Disagree Strongly <sup>1</sup>	Don't Know Not Sure	Total %	Total N
Weekly	73.2	19.7	0.0	2.8	4.2	100.0	71
Twice a month	55.8	23.3	2.3	0.0	18.6	100.0	43
Monthly	36.7	46.7	10.0	0.0	6.7	100.0	30
Major festivals	22.2	50.0	11.1	0.0	16.7	100.0	36
Once a year or less	11.8	35.3	29.4	5.9	17.6	100.0	17
Total %	49.2	31.5	6.6	1.5	11.2	100.0	
Total N	97	62	13	3	22		197

<sup>1</sup>The number of cases in the sample is obviously insufficient to permit stable percentaging. They are included for interest value.

Maclean's magazine had a cover story in April 12, 1993: "God is Alive - Canada is a nation of believers." In 1993, 86 percent of Canadians believed in God.<sup>56</sup> According to PROJECTCAN90, 82 percent believed that God exists.<sup>57</sup> At first it seems that there is a difference between these two groups but most likely it can be explained because of the difference in the sample (TABLE 7.4.7. - 3.). Hilldale respondents were mainly monthly/weekly attendees where as Rawlyk's sample in this question is general and includes also those who only affiliate but do not attend. This becomes clear when comparing other questions in this set as monthly/weekly attendees are usually more traditional in their opinions.

Table 7.4.7. - 3. Attitudes towards God: Comparison of Hilldale (1998) and National (Rawlyk, 1996: 58) (*In %'s*)

"God is understanding and forgiving." (Same question on both studies)

	<b>Hilldale Lutheran Church N=200</b>	<b>National, Lutheran/Presbyterian Weekly/Monthly attendance.</b>
<b>Agree Strongly</b>	73	56
<b>Agree Moderately</b>	18	33
<b>Disagree Moderately</b>	0	2
<b>Disagree Strongly</b>	0	1
<b>Don't know/Not sure</b>	9	4 *
<b>Total %</b>	100	96

\* 4% Agree Strongly - "God a superstition."

<sup>56</sup> "Do you believe in the existence of God or a universal spirit?" Source: Based upon data from the Canadian Institute of Public Opinion and the Angus Reid Group. In Rawlyk, 1996: 57.

<sup>57</sup> Question: "Do you believe that God exists?" In Bibby 1993: 132.



Table 7.4.7. - 4. Attitudes towards Christ: Comparison of Hilldale (1998) and National (Rawlyk, 1996: 65) (*In %'s*)

Hilldale: "Jesus is the divine Son of God."

National: "In my view, Jesus Christ was not the divine Son of God."

	<b>Hilldale Lutheran Church N=200</b>	<b>National, Lutheran/Presbyterian # Weekly/Monthly attendance.</b>
<b>Agree Strongly</b>	74	80
<b>Agree Moderately</b>	12	9
<b>Disagree Moderately</b>	2	2
<b>Disagree Strongly</b>	0	2
<b>Don't know/Not sure</b>	12	4*
<b>Total %</b>	100	97

# Data diverse because of the question is negative compared to Hilldale.

\* 4% Agree Strongly - "God a superstition."

Table 7.4.7. - 5. Crucicentrism: Comparison of Hilldale (1998) and National (Rawlyk, 1996: 74) (*In %'s*)

Hilldale: "I believe that Jesus died for my sins."

National (Rawlyk): "I feel that through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, God provided a way for the forgiveness of my sins."

	<b>Hilldale Lutheran Church N=200</b>	<b>National, Lutheran/Presbyterian Weekly/Monthly attendance.</b>
<b>Agree Strongly</b>	76	77
<b>Agree Moderately</b>	12	17
<b>Disagree Moderately</b>	1	2
<b>Disagree Strongly</b>	1	1
<b>Don't know/Not sure</b>	10	1*
<b>Total %</b>	100	98

\* 6% Agree Strongly - "God a superstition."



There is a difference between Hildale and Lutheran/Presbyterian in the Rawlyk's study in two theological questions, attitude towards Bible and Activism,. The question about the Bible is formed differently in these two studies which might explain some of the differences. Rawlyk's question emphasizes a fundamental view, which is not that familiar for Lutherans ("...is to be taken literally word for word"). In the Hildale survey in 1998 a more "Lutheran" question was used: "I believe that the Bible is God's Word." It is my sense that it is easier for a Lutheran to agree with the question used at Hildale. Another reason for difference could also be the fact that Hildale still accommodates a good dose of the five revival movements from Finland. (TABLE 7.4.7. - 6.).

Table 7.4.7. - 6. Attitude towards the Bible: Comparison of Hildale (1998) and National (Rawlyk) (*In %'s*)

Hildale: "I believe that the Bible is God's Word."

National (Rawlyk, 1996:97): "I feel that the Bible is God's Word and is to be taken literally word for word."

	<b><i>Hildale Lutheran Church N=200</i></b>	<b><i>National, Lutheran/Presbyterian</i></b> Weekly/Monthly attendance.
<b>Agree Strongly</b>	64	25
<b>Agree Moderately</b>	21	34
<b>Disagree Moderately</b>	2	25
<b>Disagree Strongly</b>	0	14
<b>Don't know/Not sure</b>	13	2*
<b>Total %</b>	100	100

\* 1% Agree Strongly - "God a superstition"

The second question where responses were somewhat different was the question about Christian Activism (TABLE 7.4.7. - 7.). At this time, questions are formed exactly the same way. The national sample is of those weekly/monthly attendees, which should match with the Hildale group of respondents. The difference is between the number of those who agree strongly with the statement: "I believe that it is very important to encourage non-Christians to become Christians." At Hildale 41 percent agree strongly, and nationally 26 percent. When two positive responses are combined these groups are almost equal, 63 percent Hildale and 64 percent nationally. One reason for the stronger





response could be that the Mission approach has been the emphasis of the whole Hilldale project.

Table 7.4.7. - 7. Activism: Comparison of Hilldale (1998) and National (Rawlyk, 1996: 110) (*In %'s*)

Hilldale: "I believe that it is very important to encourage non-Christians to become Christians."

National (Rawlyk): "I feel that it is very important to encourage non-Christians to become Christians."

	<b><i>Hilldale Lutheran Church N=200</i></b>	<b><i>National, Lutheran/Presbyterian Weekly/Monthly attendance.</i></b>
<b>Agree Strongly</b>	41	26
<b>Agree Moderately</b>	22	38
<b>Disagree Moderately</b>	11	20
<b>Disagree Strongly</b>	7	15
<b>Don't Know/Not sure</b>	19	1
<b>Total %</b>	100	100

#### 7.4.8. Attitude towards God and Supernatural

Canadians are faced with mystery and they turn to gods for answer. These, like other beliefs, are also something that is passed on from generation to generation. It is no wonder that sociologists have been interested in the supernatural. While the majority of Canadians maintain the traditional belief in God, today just over 80%, they don't stop with static belief. Almost half of the population says that they have actually experienced God's presence (Bibby 1993: 128-137). Like the sets of questions discussed in the previous two chapters, we wanted to learn what the members of Hilldale Lutheran Church believe and what their experience with supernatural is. This information again was gathered to be able to compare the respondents of this study to the national sample. In the future it will be interesting to follow-up and see how these beliefs are passed on to future generations. The set of questions were used only in 1998 study and were taken from PROJECT

CAN90 (Bibby 1993:132). Respondents were asked to indicate their opinion to the following statements: "I have personally experienced that God exists", "I believe that I can have personal contact with the spirit world", "Evil forces exist", "People can communicate with the dead," and "Horoscopes and astrological information are true" (TABLE 7.4.8. - 1.).

Table 7.4.8. - 1. God and the Supernatural: Comparison of Hilldale (1998) and National\* (PROJECT CAN90, In %'s By Row)

	Agree Strongly	Agree Moderately	Disagree Moderately	Disagree Strongly	Don't know / Not sure	Total %
I have personally experienced that God exists	46 (21)	17 (23)	6 (31)	5 (25)	26	100
I believe that I can have personal contact with the spirit world	13 (13)	13 (25)	13 (36)	19 (26)	41	100
Evil forces exist	33 (23)	25 (36)	6 (22)	7 (19)	29	100
People can communicate with the dead	5 (7)	13 (16)	10 (37)	24 (30)	48	100
Horoscopes and astrological information are true	2 (8)	9 (26)	18 (36)	36 (30)	35	100

\* National data in brackets ( ), In Bibby 1993:132.

When comparing these two groups one has to remember that PROJECT CAN90 sample represents the general public and not any church group. This can be seen clearly in two questions, "I have personally experienced that God exists" and "Evil forces exist". In these two questions there are far more of those who agree strongly at Hilldale than in the national average. The two other beliefs are surprisingly close, even though those claims are not part of Lutheran doctrine, "I believe that I can have personal contact with the spirit world" and "People can communicate with the dead." The supernatural does not seem to be any more stranger to the members of Hilldale Lutheran Church than to an average Canadian. Respondents of this 1998 study believe less often in horoscopes or astrological information than Canadians in general. All together these three sets of questions: ethical, religious faith, and supernatural, indicate that the respondents of 1998 Hilldale survey are very close in their opinions to the



Canadian national average and so speak in favor of the reliability of the survey.

#### 7.4.9. The Major Life-Concerns

In the 1994 questionnaire, four choices were given and respondents were able to rank them all if they so decided: raising children, family, health, finances and open line. Family was the major concern for about 77%, health for 61%, financial situation for 51% and raising children for 45% of the respondents. It was quite obvious that raising children was more important in the age groups of 30-39 and 40-49 and for the English speaking. It was kind of interesting that family was the major concern for everybody in the age groups of 60-69 years and over 70 years. Family was also the major concern more often for those under 19 years than those between 20-29. Family was more often the major concern for females than for males (88/63%). The difference between the Finnish and the English speaking is insignificant (TABLE 7.4.9. - 1.).

Table 7.4.9. - 1. Major Concerns in Life by Language in 1994  
(In %'s, By Row)

	<b>Finnish</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Total %</b>
<b>How to raise your children</b>	32.3	62.5	45.5
<b>Your family</b>	80.6	75.0	77.3
<b>Your health</b>	61.3	60.4	60.8
<b>Your financial situation</b>	60.0	40.7	50.9

Health was more often the major concern for males (69%) than females (48%) in 1994, for those under 29 years than those between 30 and 59 years, and for the Finnish speaking respondents who are generally older (TABLE 7.4.9 - 1.). Naturally, health was most often the concern of those over 60 years. Males carry the concern of money more often than females and it was the major concern for 75% of those in the age group of 50-59 years. Financial situation was a major concern in life more often to new members and the English speaking.



In the 1998 study, five choices were given and an open "other". The new option that was added was "How to get more out of life". Respondents had three choices for each concern: "Major Concern", "Little Concern", and "Not a Concern" (same as in 1994 study). It is interesting to note that things have changed a little since 1994 (TABLE 7.4.9. 1. and 2.). Health is now the main concern for 57% (61% in 1994) of the respondents and family for 56% (77% in 1994). At Hilddale people are more concerned about their financial situation (31%) than how to raise their children (24%). Respondents are even more often concerned about how to get more out of their life (33%) than raising their children or their financial situation. The change can be understood as a change in those who answered in 1994 and 1998 and a change in respondents life circumstances.

In PROJECT CAN90, a similar question was asked: "How often these common problems bother you?" When combining two answers "A Great Deal" or "Quite a Bit," the concerns were: Money 50%, Time 38%, Health 30%, Children 18%, Marriage/Relationship 17%, and Getting More Out of Life 34%. The response of the 1998 Hilddale survey differ quite a bit from the national sample. At Hilddale, people are more concerned about their health and family and less concerned about money/financial situation than the national average. Interestingly, the Hilddale group is equally concerned about getting more out of life than Canadians are in general (In Bibby 1993:139).

Table 7.4.9. - 2. Major Concern by Years of Membership in 1998 (In %'s within Membership/Major concern)

<b>Concern</b> N=200	<b>Not a member</b>	<b>0 - 3 years</b>	<b>4 - 9 years</b>	<b>10 - 19 years</b>	<b>20 or more</b>	<b>Row Total %</b>
<b>Children</b>	45.5	20.0	20.8	5.7	25.6	24.2
<b>Family</b>	63.6	70.0	54.2	25.7	61.6	55.6
<b>Health</b>	48.5	70.0	66.7	37.1	61.6	56.6
<b>Finances</b>	39.4	40.0	33.3	14.3	30.2	30.3
<b>More out of life</b>	48.5	50.0	29.2	34.3	23.5	33.0
<b>Total N</b>	33	20	24	35	86*	198

\* 85 in "More out of life"

For non-members the major concern was family (64%) (TABLE 7.4.9. - 2.). "How to raise my children" was also most often the major concern for non-members (46%) followed by members for 20 or more

years (26%). For those who had joined the congregation after the mission started (0-3 years), the major concern was family (70%) and health (70%). These two were also the major concerns for long time members (over 20 years). Health was the major issue for both members for 4 - 9 years (67%) and 10 - 19 years (37%). Finances were most often the concern for new members (40%) and non-members (39%). These same groups were also most concerned about how to get more out of life (50/49%).

#### **7.4.10. Church Attendance**

The earliest poll data, provided by Gallup in 1945, indicates that about 60% of Canadians were attending on close to a weekly basis. Since then the attendance has dropped dramatically. Attendance dropped to 50% by 1960, to 30% by 1980 and in 1994 is around 20% (Bibby 1995: 15,16). There is a big difference between religious groups: Roman Catholics in Quebec from 90% to 25% attendance and United from 40% to under 20%. Conservative Protestants' attendance has risen since the mid - 70's, and is the highest in any group (TABLE 7.4.10. - 1).

The number of those people who are identified with but not attending every week works out to about 65% of the Canadian population (Bibby 1993:160). The attendance level of those Protestant non-weekly attendees is naturally lower than at the Hilldale group: 9% attend 2-3 times a month, 4% once a month, 19% several times a year, 22% once a year, 22% less than once a year, and 24% never. These attendance numbers of non-weekly Protestants, even though much smaller than in this survey, are surprisingly high. Bibby's argument is that 80 - 90% of Canadians retain their religious affiliation and "most Canadians do attend services; they just don't attend regularly." (Bibby 1993:161).

Table 7.4.10. - 1. Church Attendance in Canada 1957 - 1993  
(% indicating attending "almost every week" or more)

	1957	1975	1993
<b>Nationally</b>	53	31	23
<b>Roman Catholic</b>	83	45	30
<b>Outside Quebec</b>	75	49	42
<b>Inside Quebec</b>	88	41	27
<b>Anglican</b>	24	24	16
<b>United</b>	40	28	16
<b>Conservative Protestant</b>	51	40	59

Source: Bibby, *Unknown Gods*, 1993:4-6; for 1993, Maclean's, April 12, 1993:33ff (Bibby 1993: 4-6)

Table 7.4.10. - 2. Church Attendance During the Past Year by  
Age in 1994 at Hilldale Lutheran Church (*In %'s, Total*)

<b>Attendance</b> N=107	<b>0-19</b>	<b>20-29</b>	<b>30-39</b>	<b>40-49</b>	<b>50-59<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>60-69</b>	<b>70+</b>	<b>Row Total %</b>
<b>None</b>	2.0	2.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.1
<b>Once or twice a year</b>	5.1	4.1	4.1	2.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	17.3
<b>About once a month</b>	3.1	3.1	3.1	7.1	3.1	7.1	7.1	33.7
<b>About 4 times a month</b>	2.0	0.0	4.1	9.2	1.0	14.3	13.3	43.9

<sup>1</sup>The number of cases in the sample is obviously insufficient to permit stable percentaging. They are included for interest value.

The average attendance at Hilldale Lutheran Church throughout the year was 147 in Sunday services, 125 in the Finnish service and 22 in the English (Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thunder Bay. "Annual Reports to ELCIC." 1993). Since then things have changed. Now the congregation has two pastors and the attendance at the English service on a regular Sunday is close to the Finnish service. Unfortunately no official records have been kept since the move to the new church. In 1994, 46% of the respondents attended church every Sunday, 34% about once a month, 18% twice a year and 5 % not at all (Table 7.4.10. - 2.). In 1998, 36 % attended weekly, 22% twice a month, 15% monthly, 19% major festivals, and 8% once a year or less



(Table 7.4.10. - 3.). The ELCIC average weekly attendance has fallen from 53,571 attendees in 1986 to 48,484 in 1993, a decline of 5,087, down 9.5%. The national ELCIC average attendance of baptized members in 1993 was 24%, 34% of confirmed members, and 55% of communing members (Kuhn 1995: 43).

Table 7.4.10. - 3. Comparison of Attendance by Gender in 1994\* and 1998 (*In %'s*)

N=107	Weekly	Twice a month	Monthly	Major festivals	Once a year, < or none	Total %
<b>Male '94</b>	29.7	0.0	43.2	18.9	8.1	100.0
<b>Male '98</b>	35.5	17.1	15.8	19.7	11.8	100.0
<b>Female '94</b>	54.5	0.0	25.8	16.7	3.0	100.0
<b>Female '98</b>	36.1	24.6	14.8	18.0	6.6	100.0
<b>Total '94</b>	45.6	0.0	32.0	17.5	4.9	100.0
<b>Total '98</b>	35.9	21.7	15.2	18.7	8.6	100.0

\* In 1994, there was one option less than in 1998. In 1998, "Once or twice a year was changed to "Major festivals (Easter, Christmas, etc.) and "Twice a month was added".

At Hilldale females generally attended more often than males (TABLE 7.4.10. - 3.). The difference between gender has decreased since 1994. In 1998, 38 percent of attendees were male and 62 percent female (36/64% in 1994). The main difference is their level of involvement measured by attendance at worship services. The male weekly attendance is up from the first survey from 30% to 36%, while the female weekly attendance is down 18% to 36%. In 1994, there was no "twice a month" option in the questionnaire. The drop in the female attendance could be explained by shifts to the "twice a month" category. When these two categories are combined female attendance is up to 61%. Male attendance for weekly or bi-weekly would be 53%. One reason for the increased weekly attendance for men could be that building the new church gave especially men something to do and also gave them "ownership" in the new building. Major festival attendance has remained about the same but monthly attendance has dropped from 43% to 16%, which indicates more regular attendance of the respondents.



Proportionally those who have joined the congregation during the mission (0 - 3 years) are the most regular attendees, 45% worshipping weekly followed by members for 4 - 9 years, 44% attending weekly. Older attend more often than younger, widowed more often than married, married more often than singles, and Finnish more often than English.

The respondents were asked "How has your involvement in the congregation changed in the last few years?" Three choices were given, "increased", "decreased", and "remained the same". In 1994, involvement at services had remained the same for 51%. In 1998, the percentage is down to 48%. However there is a significant change from 1994 to 1998. The involvement is up from 22% ('94) to 33%('98) and attendance is down from 27%('94) to 19%(98'). In 1994, at the age group of 60-69 years people were more likely to increase their involvement and to decrease their involvement after 70 years. In 1998 the age group of 13-19 years, people were most likely to increase their involvement and in the 20-29 years age group to decrease it. The new members, 0-3 years, were also more likely (56%) to increase their participation than the older members. There was no significant difference in 1994 with regard to increase or decrease in attendance between the two language groups but in 1998, 40 percent of the English speaking had increased their involvement versus 24% of the Finnish speaking.

The most significant factor of increased attendance in the 1994 study was "stronger faith" (64%) followed by "more time available" (14%), "because of children" (11%) and "positive attitude towards church" (11%). The English speaking considered the "positive attitude" as the main reason whereas for Finnish speaking "stronger faith" was the main reason for increased attendance. In 1998 respondents were able to rank their responses from "1" - "most important" to "6" - "least important". The most important reason for 31 percent why for their participation had increased was "more time available", followed by "because of children" (28%), "stronger faith" (27%), and "more positive attitude toward church" (19%). For new members (0-3years) the most important reason was "stronger faith" 38%, "more time available" 33%, and "more positive attitude" (30%).

Time was by far the most important factor in 1994 and also in 1998 for the decrease in attendance (43%/1994, 58%/1998), followed by health problems (24%/1994), more negative attitude (14%/1994),





decreasing faith (11%/1994) and less involvement of children (8%/1994). Time was especially a major concern for younger generations, non-members and the English speaking (78%/1994). In 1998, not too many people answered this question at all. All the answers were, "less time available". Because of the number of answers, no significant differences could be found between the groups.

The respondents were asked in 1994 and in 1998 to think for a moment of their five closest friends (individuals or couples) with whom they share social and recreational life, and not to include close relatives. "How many are members of our congregation?" In 1994, from the whole group 44% had five or even more of their closest friends in the congregation and 18% none. In 1998, 34% had five or more and 33 % had none. Generally, female respondents had more friends in the congregation than males; older had more than younger (.497\*\*), and the Finnish speaking had significantly more than the English speaking (.639\*\*). 46% in 1994 and 51% in 1998 of the English speaking said that they had no close friends in the congregation and only 15% in 1994 and 12% in 1998 had more than five. 57% of the Finnish speaking in 1994 had more than five friends and 65% in 1998. When compared to the reason "because of friends" as a reason why people belong to this church, the difference is also quite significant between the two surveys 65% in 1994 and 44% in 1998. Belonging to church because of friends in 1998 was twice more important for English speaking (29%) than for Finnish speaking (14%).

#### **7.4.11. The Future of the Congregation**

The respondents were asked two specific questions about the future of Hilldale Lutheran Church. First, how do they see the attendance in twenty years in the Finnish and English services. Compared to the present situation most respondents thought that in twenty years, our English ministry will be significantly stronger than today. It is difficult to predict what will be the value of the Finnish culture after twenty years. According to the theories of assimilation and retention, Finnish heritage will have less and less value as years go by unless immigration from Finland to Canada will increase significantly. In 1994, 76 percent thought that there will be more people attending the English service or equal attendance in both



services and in 1998, 92 percent thought the same way (TABLE 7.4.11. - 1.). In 1998, there is hardly any difference between language groups. Older members tend to think that more will be attending the English service whereas younger ones think that the attendance is likely to be equal. In 1998 survey, there is an interesting detail, 25 percent of the 13-19 age group see that most of the people will be attending the Finnish service in twenty years.

Table 7.4.11. - 1. How Do People See Hilldale Lutheran Church in Twenty Years According to the Attendance in Finnish or English Services by Age in 1994, ( ), and 1998\* (In %'s By Row Total)

N=(93) N=189	0-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+	Row Total %
<b>Most Attending Finnish services</b>	(25.0) 24.1	(33.3) 5.9	(0.0) 3.8	(11.1) 0.0	(20.0) <sup>1</sup> 0.0	(33.3) 2.9	(31.6) 13.9	(22.6) 7.9
<b>Most Attending English services</b>	(-) 48.3	(33.3) 64.7	(25.0) 69.3	(44.4) 56.7	(80.0) <sup>1</sup> 47.1	(44.4) 70.6	(36.8) 41.7	(35.5) 56.6
<b>Equal Attendance</b>	(75.0) 27.6	(33.4) 29.4	(75.0) 26.9	(44.5) 43.3	(0.0) 52.9	(22.3) 26.5	(31.6) 44.4	(41.9) 35.5
<b>Total %</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Total N,</b>	(12) 29	(9) 17	(12) 26	(18) 30	(5) 17	(18) 34	(19) 36	(93) 189

<sup>1</sup>The number of cases in the sample is obviously insufficient to permit stable percentaging. They are included for interest value.

\* Age groups 0-12 and 13-19 combined

People were also asked to think of the future size of Hilldale Lutheran Church. 35% in 1994 and 28% in 1998 taught that it would be the same size, 33% in 1994 and 65% in 1998 that it will be bigger, and 32% in 1994 and 7% in 1998 think that it will be smaller. Overall, this means that one-third thought in 1994 that our church membership would be declining and in 1998 only 7 percent. In 1998, two-thirds taught that it will be growing. In 1994, mainly younger respondents



thought that our membership is going to increase; in the age group of 30-39 years, 73% tended to think that way. In 1998, a clear majority in every age group tended to think that way. There was no attempt to try to study why they think the way they do, but one way to understand their opinions is to see their vision of the future as a response to what is happening in the congregation right now. The change from 1994 to 1998 is significant and is an indicator of the vision and morale of the congregation. This change in part indicates also the success of the transition. It is important that there seems to be no significant difference between the two language groups.

#### **7.4.12. The Mission of Hilldale Lutheran Church**

In both surveys, we asked if there is a sense of excitement among members about the future of our church. In 1994, forty-four percent thought that there was excitement, and more likely to think that way were age groups 0-19, 50-59, and 70 years and up, as well as the Finnish speaking. The leadership (clergy and lay) of the church had the full confidence and support of 58% of the members in 1994. In this first survey, the older the respondents the more confidence they had. It was interesting to note in 1994 that more respondents supported the leadership than the relocation. In 1994, the Finnish speaking respondent had more confidence in the leadership than the English speaking (65/42%).

In the 1998 survey, 31% agreed strongly that there was excitement among the members about the future of Hilldale Lutheran Church and 39% agreed moderately. To compare this response to 1994, one has to combine these two responses because there was only one option in 1994, "agree". This means that excitement is up 28%, in spite of all the difficulties from 41% to 80%. Most likely to think that there was excitement were those in the age groups of 20-29 and 40-49 years. New members (0-3 years) were the most excited group and also had the most confidence on leadership. From 1994 to 1998, the full confidence on leadership has is up from 58% to 73% (37% "agree strongly" and 36% "agree moderately"). In the follow-up study, the confidence was highest in the age groups of 20-29 and 50 and up. Like in 1994, the Finnish speaking (83%) had more confidence in the leadership than the English speaking (66%).



Table 7.4.12. - 1. Attitude towards the Proposal of Building a New Church by Age in 1994 (*In %'s By Column*)

N=97	0-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59 <sup>1</sup>	60-69	70+	Row Total %
In favor of building	75.0	44.4	83.3	61.1	50.0	40.0	7.2	53.6
Against building	8.3	55.6	8.3	22.2	50.0	40.0	50.0	33.0
Don't know	16.7		8.3	16.7		20.0	15.0	13.4
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total %	12	9	12	18	6	20	20	97

<sup>1</sup>The number of cases in the sample is obviously insufficient to permit stable percentaging. They are included for interest value.

When we asked in 1994 if they were in favor of building a new church, 54% said yes, 33% said no and 13% did not know (TABLE 7.4.12. - 1.). About two months after that survey, 83% of the members of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thunder Bay voted in favor of building a new church, selling the old one and hiring a mission pastor, and 13% voted against the plan. It is difficult to explain this change. Perhaps those who were in favor participated more actively, maybe they changed their minds or, most likely, most of them were the ones that were undecided at the time of the survey. Eighty-three percent of 30-39 year olds were in favor but only 35% of those who were 70 years and over. It is quite natural that older people did not see the importance of new facilities but thought that “the old church is good enough for me.” People with young families, on the other hand, were building a church for themselves and their children. From those who responded in English, 75% were in favor of building but only 38% from the Finnish. What was also important was that only 12% of English speaking respondents were against it, as opposed to 47% of the Finnish.<sup>58</sup> When we asked if the members would actually be involved in the building project, 36% said yes and 43% said no. Those who said that they were going to be involved were mainly between 30-59 years, new members and Finnish speaking. English speaking were more in

<sup>58</sup> Partly because of this data, the congregational leaders worked hard to pass on the information about our mission and about the plans of relocating. The results of this study also forced the congregation to sharpen its vision.



favor of building but did not like to get involved in the building project. Could this have been seen as a sign of difference in commitment! Several studies claim that there is significant difference in commitment between generations. (In this study, English speaking are generally younger than the Finnish speaking, see FIGURES 7.4.1. - 1., 7.4.2. - 1. and TABLE 7.4.2. - 1.)<sup>59</sup>

In the 1998 questionnaire, respondents were asked if they were in favor of the congregation building a condominium on the same site as the Church and if they would be interested in buying a condominium. English speaking were more interested in the building project than Finnish speaking (31/26%) but interest in buying a condominium was almost the same (8/7%). When developing the strategy for the mission, we wanted to have something for everyone. Building condominiums on the same site was planned especially for the older members of the congregation. It is no wonder that the age group of 60-69 were the most interested of the building project and 50-59 most interested in buying. Surprisingly high was the interest in building also in the 20-29 years, but maybe for different reasons. The other strategical reason for building the condominiums was that by selling the land the congregation would be able to pay back the mortgage that had to be taken to build the new church. The land sale would also generate money back into the ELCIC Mission Fund for future missions like Hilldale.

Based on the first congregational study in 1994, the mission committee made the Purpose Statement:

We exist to make disciples of all peoples through witness, service and fellowship. We proclaim God's love in word and deed, through actively caring for the emotional, spiritual and physical needs of the community.

Based on the Mission and Purpose Statements, the congregation adopted following goals:

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<sup>59</sup> For a fuller discussion of cultural differences between generations, see: James Davison Hunter, *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America* (New York: BasicBooks, 1991), passim.; Tex Sample, *U.S. Lifestyles and Mainline Churches: A Key to Reaching People in the 90's* (Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990), passim.



1. To be faithful to our future and prepare the church for a growing English ministry.
2. To be faithful to our ethnic background and serve the Finnish community as long as needed.
3. To build a new church to provide a place for: The Community to Worship, Sunday School, Youth Group, Choir(s), Ladies' Guild, Bible Studies, Confirmation, The Community Groups (i.e. Scouts, Guides, AA, etc.), Day Care Center, Meal Service, Art Groups, etc.

Motto: We want to be sensitive to the changing social and spiritual needs of the community. Let's Grow!<sup>60</sup>

In the annual meeting, February 1994, the congregation also decided to call a mission pastor, as mentioned before. At the time of the first survey only 36% were in favor of calling a mission pastor, 26% against and 37% did not know. Calling a mission pastor got most support from the age group of 40-49 years (61%) and, secondly, from the age group of 0-19 years (58%). Most strongly against were people over 50 years. English speaking supported more than the Finnish (42/32%) who disagreed more strongly (23% of Finns/5% of English). To establish the position of a mission pastor, the congregation was planning to form a support circle and people were asked how much they would be willing to give. Sixty-one percent promised to support and the rest said that they were unable to support. Seventy-seven percent of members between ages 20-29 said that they cannot pledge but 66% of 50-59 years were willing to pledge. Those who answered in English were more likely to be unable to contribute than those who answered in Finnish.

#### 7.4.13. Summary of the 1994 Survey

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<sup>60</sup> The whole process of developing the mission statement and the document "Enabling the Ministry of Others a Mission Statement for a Canadian Finnish Lutheran Congregation (Appendix 2).



After discussing these issues of the results of first congregational survey in 1994 with the Church Council, Local Advisory Group/Mission Committee and the congregation, I wrote down the following summary from the learning experience and what it meant to the people at Hildale Lutheran Church:

Our congregation, in many ways, has been very successful in its ministry among the newly arrived Finnish immigrants and like many other congregations, we got stuck in our success. It is easy to point out the earlier time of vitality and growth and the efforts to build on our success. It is kind of a paradox that our success in the ministry among the Finnish immigrants led us to embrace organizational patterns and habits that no longer serve us.

Our congregation was able to “succeed” because we were able to connect our unique resources and the competencies with the ongoing needs of the newly arrived immigrants. It is crucial to realize the right timing so that the congregation does not get too far into decline, sticking with patterns that worked in the past and staying with those patterns past their usefulness. Congregational leadership is vulnerable to this kind of tunnel vision where the Finnish ministry was the one that was developed and it was effective. Inherent in this disability was the failure to see the impact of long-term events, of gradual shifts in the environment surrounding the church and of changes within the congregation itself. The congregational leadership failed to see the holistic view of the community because of the necessity of the Finnish ministry.

One of the major functions of an immigrant congregation is to preserve what the immigrants had experienced back in their homeland and because of that the homeostatic forces have been very strong. The congregation’s environment has in many ways been there, in Finland, instead of here, and the new and “hostile” environment has only supported the status quo of an immigrant congregation. Immigrant congregational systems are often codependent because of these same reasons. For many immigrants the church is the safe “island” in the new homeland and this aspect leads to codependency as well.

From the point of view of polarity management, the goal is to maximize the positive aspects of polarities, here assimilation and differentiation, while minimizing the downsides. It is also critical that



the supporters of each polarity be aware of the downside of their own polarity and see the whole picture.

Congregational leadership should see both ends of the polarity. There is danger at both ends. Firstly: What has worked well in the past becomes the mandate for the future. Secondly: too much change. In our reaction to our “stuckness,” we may swing to the other extreme. For congregational leadership, it is important to understand that there is no balance, only tension, no single right answer in polarity management terms, but polarities to manage. For an ethnic congregation, it is important to value a good tension between polarities and the importance of maintaining internal variety. It is important for its leaders to develop a consciousness about the nature of the system which they minister.

Developing a strategy for an immigrant congregation in a transition requires putting its vision into practice. This dimension can also be called mission. The congregation assesses its attitude towards the future. Planning for the strategy enables the congregation to develop a clear sense of purpose and direction.

As part of the planning, a congregational study helps to develop a more realistic picture of the congregation in transition. In many ways our congregation fits well into the picture of other mainline congregations in Canada. The right, left and the cultural middle can be found in our congregation. The gap between generations is quite obvious. Our past and future are present in our congregation. At the moment we are between two stages realizing that what worked in the past might not work in the future.

Our congregation was able to “succeed” because we were able to connect our unique resources and competencies with the current needs of the people that affiliate with our church and live in the surrounding community. Our survival depends on a repetition of that success. Ethnicity is our forte and could be used again to connect with those who affiliate with our congregation. It is important to note that Finnish heritage is one of the most important reasons why anybody belongs to our congregation. It is important for the young as well as for those who speak English. Naturally, ethnicity will play a different role in the future because of the assimilation and retention process. The ethnicity that was our success but no longer served us could be rediscovered and become once again the basis of our congregational





strength. Ethnicity has been seen quite often as a limitation for a congregation and its mission; this study supports the idea that it can be seen as an asset.

## 8. AFFILIATION TO HILLDALE LUTHERAN CHURCH

The strategy adopted by the congregation in 1995 was based on Bibby's theory of the childhood affiliation, which he calls also the religious memory. Reginald Bibby and many others also support the importance of one's ethnic affiliation. These two, religious and ethnic memory, were the cornerstone of the strategy of Hilldale Lutheran Church (7.3.). In the 1998 study, a set of questions was added to measure ethnic and religious affiliation. After three years of active mission, the congregation wanted to find out how the strategy was working. How do the members and visitors affiliate with this church? What is the affiliation of the new members who have joined the congregation after the mission started? Has the strategical plan been successful? As said before, the mission was targeted towards two specific groups: people living in the community who had different denominational affiliations, and those who had some kind of an affiliation with Hilldale Lutheran Church, ethnic or religious. The analysis of the 1998 study was presented to the Church Council, Mission Committee and the congregation in 1998.

### *8.1. Parents - Mother and Father*

As previously mentioned one of the key characteristics of the Canadian religious milieu is that Canadians affiliate strongly with their historically dominant groups and their religious affiliation, especially, is extremely stable (TABLE 8.1. - 1.). We wanted to find out what is the level of intergenerational switching and how does this group compare to the national surveys. The respondents were asked: "What is/was the denomination of your parents?"<sup>61</sup> They were asked to indicate the

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<sup>61</sup> Each option in the 1998 questionnaire (Lutheran, Anglican, Roman Catholic etc.) in questions 30 – 35 has been recorded as individual dicotomic variable.



preference of mother and father. On the national survey which is used for comparison, PROJECT CAN85, the father's affiliation is used to represent both parents because the correlation between parents is very high (.770\*\*). In this study I am sometimes reporting both parents separately using an average or one of the parents. In this Hilldale 1998 survey the correlation between the denomination of mother and father is not quite as high but can still be considered very high (.587\*\*).

At Hilldale. the intergenerational switching is significantly lower than the national average (SEE TABLES 6.4. – 1.). On national sample, 75% of Lutherans followed the denomination of their parents; at Hilldale over 89% have retained the religious affiliation of their parent(s) (TABLES 8.1. - 1 and 2.). Could this difference in religious affiliation be explained by ethnic continuity? There is no significant difference between the affiliation to mother (90%) or father (89%). Females are more faithful to their parental religious affiliation than males (93/84%).

Table 8.1. - 1. Intergenerational Switching by Mother and Language: Hilldale Lutheran Church 1998 (*In %'s By Row*)

N=199	Luth	Ang	UC	Pres	RC	Evng	Other	Total %
<b>English</b>	82.0	5.4	1.8	2.7	4.5	.9	2.7	100.0
<b>Finnish</b>	100.0							100.0
<b>Total %</b>	89.9	3.0	1.0	1.5	2.5	.5	1.5	100.0

Table 8.1. - 2. Intergenerational Switching by Father and Language: Hilldale Lutheran Church 1998 (*In %'s By Row*)

N=191	Luth	Ang	UC	Pres	RC	Evng	Other	Total %
<b>English</b>	79.6	1.9	1.9	2.9	6.8	0.0	6.8	100.0
<b>Finnish</b>	100.0							100.0
<b>Total %</b>	89.0	1.0	1.0	1.6	3.7		3.7	100.0

It is quite obvious that there is a significant correlation between mother's/father's denomination and where one has been baptized (.447\*\*/.465\*\*), gone to Sunday School (.441\*\*/.456\*\*), confirmed

(509\*\*/.442\*\*), and childhood affiliation (.515\*\*/.526\*\*). Usually both parents are from the same denomination, 86% both Lutheran and 5% both Anglican, United, Presbyterian or Roman Catholic. When parents were from different denomination the other one was either Evangelical or other.

Table 8.1. - 3. Membership by Identification of Mother 1998  
(In %'s by Column)

Denomination of Mother N=199	Membership					Row Total %
	Not a member	0-3 years	4-9 years	10-19 years	20 or more years	
<b>Luth</b>	71.0	75.0	91.7	97.1	97.7	90.3
<b>Ang</b>	12.9	5.0	4.2	0.0	0.0	3.1
<b>UC</b>	3.2	0.0	4.2	0.0	0.0	1.0
<b>Pres</b>	6.5	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.5
<b>RC</b>	3.2	10.0	0.0	2.9	0.0	2.0
<b>Evng</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2	.5
<b>Other</b>	3.2	5.0	0.0	0.0	1.2	1.5
<b>Total %</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

For the purpose of the mission strategy, it is interesting to notice that 75% of the new members have been following their mother (TABLE 8.1. - 3.) and 72% their father. These numbers are very close to the national average of Lutheran intergenerational switching. Ninety two per cent of relatively new members in the age group of 4-9 years and 97% in the 10-19 years category have retained their parents' denomination. The mothers of those who are not members are 71% of the time Lutheran and fathers 66% of the time. For long time members, 100% of their fathers are Lutheran and 98% of their mothers. Even though the intergenerational switching is more common in the new members group, the stability is still very high and a very good indicator of one's future religious affiliation. In the future, it would be interesting to study which ones of the new members will stay.



## ***8.2. Childhood Affiliation and Sunday School***

As discussed before in chapter, "Important Concepts", one of the best ways to predict one's future religious affiliation is the family home. Religion is passed to the future generations in their childhood home, including such matters as rites of passage for oneself or attending religious festivals, and religious habits at home, such as evening prayer, grace, etc. The respondents were asked what their childhood church affiliation was. With this question, we wanted also to find out if the person had been in his/her childhood involved with another church while being identified by another one. People can be attending a United, Anglican, Roman Catholic or any other church for practical reasons - its location, marriage, because they like the minister, and so on. That's not to say, however, that they cease to regard themselves as Lutheran.

It is interesting to note that the 1990 national survey reveals that this pattern of "involvement without identification" ranges from about one-in-three in Protestant churches to one-in-four in mainline congregations and only one-in-50 for those attending Roman Catholic churches (Bibby 1993). At Hilldale, only under one out of ten (9.1%) had been involved in their childhood with another denomination other than their parents, identification (TABLE 8.2. - 1.). One has to note that we asked only about their involvement during their childhood and not throughout their life span, which could explain the lower than usual numbers.

The correlation between childhood involvement and membership (-.439\*\*) is stronger than parents' affiliation and membership (-.278\*\*). Childhood involvement seems to be a somewhat better indicator of one's future religious affiliation than identification of a parent. One has to be critical when analyzing the question about childhood involvement and how respondents understand it. The question about parents' denomination is much more straightforward, thus the information can be considered more valid.



Table 8.2. - 1. Childhood Involvement and Identification by Parents' Identification 1998 *(In %'s)*

Childhood Involvement N=196	Denomination of Parents							Total %
	Luth	Ang	UC	Pres	RC	Evng	Other	
<b>Finn/Hilldale</b>	77.9				.5	.5	.5	79.5
<b>Luth</b>								
<b>Luth</b>	8.2				.5		1.0	9.7
<b>Ang</b>		2.6						2.6
<b>RC</b>					.5	1.5		2.1
<b>UC</b>			1.0	.5				1.5
<b>Pres</b>				.5				.5
<b>Evng</b>		.5						.5
<b>Other</b>	3.6							3.6
<b>Total %</b>	89.7	3.1	1.0	1.5	2.6	.5	1.5	100.0

Table 8.2. - 2. Childhood Involvement and Identification by Membership 1998 *(In %'s By Row)*

Childhood Involvement N=196	Membership						Row Total %
	Not a member	0-3 years	4-9 years	10-19 years	20 or more years		
<b>Finn/Hilldale</b>	45.2	38.9	79.2	88.2	96.5		79.3
<b>Luth</b>							
<b>Luth</b>	22.6	22.2	12.5	8.8	2.3		9.8
<b>Ang</b>	9.7	5.6	4.2				2.6
<b>RC</b>		16.7					1.6
<b>UC</b>	6.5		4.2				1.6
<b>Pres</b>	3.2						.5
<b>Evng</b>	3.2						.5
<b>Other</b>	9.7	16.7		2.9	1.2		4.1
<b>Total %</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0		100.0

Most of those who were baptized at Finnish/Hilldale also went to Sunday School at the same church (96%). Finnish means both the Lutheran churches in Finland and the former name of Hilldale



Lutheran Church. The correlation between where one went to Sunday School and where one was confirmed is very high (.738\*\*). Thirty-nine percent of those who are not members and 36% of the new members, went to Sunday School at Hilldale/Finnish. Twenty-seven percent of the new members went to Sunday School in another Lutheran church. Eighty-three percent of those who joined the congregation just before the mission started went to Sunday School at Finnish/Hilldale. It seems that the mission and relocation has attracted a number of other Lutheran church affiliates.

### ***8.3. Rites of Passage, Baptism and Confirmation***

As noted in previous chapters, culture does not have to be seen as religion's enemy and neither the people. A majority of them are actually very close to church through religious memory. Even though they are not coming to church they are not leaving it either. Occasional services and rites of passage are the moments when these people surface at the church and their emotional and psychological ties with church are confirmed. These people can be identified by community surveys. They can be called the affiliates and they are the pool of opportunity for local congregation.

One of the starting points of this whole project was the concern for where those who have been baptized, confirmed and married at Finnish/Hilldale Lutheran Church are. This led to the strategy planning and the first congregational survey. Based on those findings, the congregation adopted a strategy for the transition to reach them. In order to find out how successful the strategy had been we asked in the second survey where people were baptized and confirmed. The new members (0-3 years) were also asked if they had attended any church ceremony at Hilldale Lutheran Church or at the previous location, the Finnish Lutheran Church on Second St before joining the church.

The numbers are quite strongly confirming that the mission has been attracting those who have been baptized in a Lutheran church (88 %). When comparing new members to members for 4-9 years, one can see the impact of the mission. People who joined the congregation before the actual mission started were mainly (75%) baptized at



Finnish/Hilldale, and only 47% of those who joined after the mission started. This further confirms that the mission has been able to reach affiliates from other Lutheran churches. Whereas 17% of the members for 4-9 years were baptized in another Lutheran church, 41% of the new members were baptized in another Lutheran church (TABLE 8.3. - 1.).

Table 8.3. - 1. Where Baptized by Membership 1998 (*In %'s by row*)

Where Baptized N=196	Membership					Row Total %
	Not a member	0-3 years	4-9 years	10-19 years	20 or more years	
<b>Finn/Hilldale Luth</b>	38.7	47.1	75.0	80.0	93.0	75.6
<b>Luth</b>	22.6	41.2	16.7	20.0	5.8	15.5
<b>Ang</b>	6.5		4.2			1.6
<b>RC</b>	3.2	11.8				1.6
<b>UC</b>	16.1		4.2			3.1
<b>Pres</b>	3.2					.5
<b>Evng</b>	6.5					1.0
<b>Other</b>	3.2				1.2	1.0
<b>Total %</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

As expected, there is a strong correlation between where a person has been baptized and childhood involvement (.752\*\*), where one went to Sunday School (.714\*\*) and where they were confirmed (.680\*\*). The correlation between where they were baptized, is significant but, not as strong, with the denomination of father (.465\*\*) and mother (.447\*\*). Ninety-six percent of those who had been baptized at Finnish/Hilldale also had gone there to Sunday School, 98 percent had childhood involvement, and 99 percent of them were also confirmed at the same church. On the whole, all of these questions seem to measure the same phenomena, childhood affiliation.

We asked the respondents where they had been confirmed. Eighty-six percent of the respondents were confirmed at Finnish/Hilldale. The church where one had been confirmed has a strong correlation with the church of childhood involvement (.878\*\*),





where the person went to Sunday School (.738\*\*), and where he/she was baptized (.680\*\*). Same that was said about where new members had been baptized can be said also about those who had been confirmed, that the mission has been attracting affiliates from other Lutheran congregations.

Table 8.3. - 2. Where Confirmed by Membership 1998 (*In %'s by row*)

Where Confirmed N=185	Membership					Row Total %
	Not a member	0-3 years	4-9 years	10-19 years	20 or more years	
<b>Finn/Hilldale</b>	57.7	66.7	83.3	91.2	96.5	85.9
<b>Luth</b>	19.2	20.0	12.5	8.8	3.5	9.2
<b>Ang</b>	7.7		4.2			1.6
<b>RC</b>		13.3				1.1
<b>UC</b>	7.7					1.1
<b>Pres</b>						
<b>Evng</b>						
<b>Other</b>	7.7					1.1
<b>Total %</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Bibby writes in favor of paying attention to rites of passage and other occasions at church because those are the touch points where the church can be in contact with the loose affiliates (Bibby 1993, 300). The respondents were asked if they had attended any church ceremony or other occasion at Finnish/Hilldale. All of the new members had been attending a wedding, bake sale and/or a concert.

The new members were asked to tell how they heard about this new church. Most of them followed the well-traveled path - "a relative or a friend told me" (47%). The second most important reason was, "I saw the new building" (33%) and only 7% answered, "Mission Pastor dropped by my door".<sup>62</sup> They were also asked why they came back

<sup>62</sup> The number of cases in the new members' sample is insufficient to permit stable percentaging. They are included for interest value.

after their initial visit and why they decided not to return. Nobody answered the last question.

The new members were asked to rank the following choices from 1- most important to 13- least important: Convenient location, Convenient time of worship services, I felt welcomed by the people, I felt welcomed by the pastor(s), I enjoyed the overall worship service, I found the message of the sermon meaningful, I enjoyed the presentation of the sermon, I enjoyed the music, I was invited to return, I found meaningful things to do, My children/family wanted to return, I felt comfortable and relaxed, and an open other. The most important reason to return was, "I felt welcomed by the pastor(s)" (44%), followed by convenient location (30%), and "I was invited to return" (17%). When combining this information with how they heard about Hilldale, personal contact seems to be one of the most important ways to attract new members and to make them stay<sup>62</sup>.

#### ***8.4. Ethnic Affiliation***

The Hilldale Lutheran Church adopted a strategy to use people's ethnicity as a resource in the mission. For the actual mission, it meant that the congregation focused their resources on two fields, the community around the new church building and those who affiliated with Hilldale Lutheran Church. This affiliation was understood to include both contact with Lutheran church and Finnish ethnicity. It will be interesting to find out if this strategy has been successful. The respondents were asked what their ethnic background is using a scale from being Finnish oneself to having Finnish friends (TABLE 8.4. - 1.). Seventy-one percent answered they are Finnish, 11% have Finnish parents and 8% have one Finnish parent. Only 4% have no affiliation and only 1.5% of them do not have any previous Lutheran affiliation. This means that 98.5 percent of the respondents have either religious or ethnic affiliation with the congregation.



Table 8.4. - 1. Ethnic Background by Language 1998 (*In %'s by Row*)

Language N=200	I Am a Finn	Both Parents Are Finn	One Parent Is Finn	Finnish Relatives	Married to Finn	Finnish Friends	No Ethnic Affiliation	Total %
English	49.6	19.5	14.2	.9	5.2	3.5	7.1	100.0
Finnish	98.9	1.1						100.0
Total %	71.0	11.5	8.0	.5	3.0	2.0	4.0	100.0

It is quite natural that those who responded in Finnish (8.4. - 1.) and were considered to be Finnish speaking are also Finnish (99%). Fifty per cent of those who speak English (responded in English) are Finnish and 83 per cent have at least one Finnish parent<sup>63</sup>. Even though there was no question about which generation immigrants the respondents were, it is safe to assume that if the answer is that both or one of the parents is Finnish the respondent is second generation. More of the females are first generation than males (78/59%) and more of the males are second-generation (both or one parent is Finnish) than females (26/15%) (TABLE 8.4. - 2.).

Table 8.4. - 2. Ethnic Background by Gender 1998 (*In %'s by row*)

Gender N=200	I am a Finn	Both Parents are Finn	One Parent is Finn	Finnish Relatives	Married to Finn	Finnish Friends	No Affiliation	Total %
Male	59.2	17.1	9.2	1.3	3.9	3.9	5.4	100.0
Female	78.2	8.1	7.3		2.4	.8	3.2	100.0
Total %	71.0	11.5	8.0	.5	3.0	2.0	4.0	100.0

Because the immigration from Finland to Canada has decreased since 1950, it is understandable that there are more Finnish people in the older age groups than in the younger ones (TABLE 8.4. - 3.). Some of the respondents in the age group 13-19 years might consider

<sup>63</sup> Assuming that those who are Finnish have at least one parent who is Finnish.

themselves Finnish even though they might have been born in Canada, since the numbers are exceptionally high. It is quite common in today's Canada that young people have a strong ethnic identity (Bibby 1993). As mentioned before, this study supports the presumption that ethnicity is also important to younger generations.

Table 8.4. - 3. Ethnic Background by Age 1998 (*In %'s by row*)

Age N=200	I am a Finn	Both Parents are Finn	One Parent is Finn	Finnish Relatives	Married to Finn	Finnish Friends	No Affiliation	Total %/N
<b>0 – 12<sup>1</sup> years</b>	100.0							100.0 1
<b>13 - 19 years</b>	43.3	10.0	40.0				6.7	100.0 30
<b>20 -29 years</b>	52.9	17.6	5.9		5.9	5.9	11.8	100.0 17
<b>30 -39 years</b>	40.8	40.7	3.7	3.7	3.7		7.4	100.0 27
<b>40 - 49 years</b>	66.7	6.7	6.7		9.9	6.7	3.3	100.0 30
<b>50 - 59 years</b>	84.1	5.3				5.3	5.3	100.0 19
<b>60 - 69 years</b>	97.2	2.8						100.0 36
<b>70 - 79 years</b>	92.5	5.0			2.5			100.0 40
<b>Total %/N</b>	71.0	11.5	8.0	.5	3.0	2.0	4.0	100.0 200

<sup>1</sup>The number of cases in the sample is obviously insufficient to permit stable percentaging. They are included for interest value.

Since the mission started, 50% of the new members are Finnish and 75% have at least one Finnish parent. Ten per cent of the new members are not Finnish but are married to a Finn, 5% have Finnish friends and 10% have no affiliation (TABLE 8.4. - 4.). Only 1% of those new members who did not have Finnish affiliation had not been baptized at a Lutheran church and thus were considered as not having ethnic or religious affiliation.



Table 8.4. - 4. Ethnic Background by Membership 1998  
(In %'s by row)

Member- ship N=197	I am a Finn	Both Parents are Finn	One Parent is Finn	Finnish Relatives	Married to Finn	Finnish Friends	No Affiliation	Total %
<b>Not a Member</b>	33.3	21.2	12.1		9.1	6.1	18.2	100.0
<b>0-3 years</b>	50.0	10.0	15.0		10.0	5.0	10.0	100.0
<b>4-9 years</b>	70.8		20.8	4.2	4.2			100.0
<b>10-19 years</b>	77.1	14.3	8.6					100.0
<b>20 or more</b>	89.4	9.4	1.2					100.0
<b>Total %</b>	71.6	11.2	8.1	.5	3.0	1.5	4.1	100.0

Table 8.4. - 5. Ethnic Background by Belonging to Church because of Finnish Heritage 1998 (In %'s by row)

Finnish Heritage N=200	I am a Finn	Both Parents are Finn	One Parent is Finn	Finnish Relatives	Married to Finn	Finnish Friends	No Affiliation	Total %
<b>Agree Strongly</b>	78.8	17.7	3.5					100.0
<b>Agree Moderately</b>	63.2	14.3	18.4		4.1			100.0
<b>Disagree Moderately</b>	20.0		20.0		20.0	20.0	20.0	100.0
<b>Disagree Strongly</b>							100.0	100.0
<b>Don't know Not sure</b>	74.1	1.7	5.2	1.7	5.2	5.2	6.9	100.0
<b>Total %</b>	71.0	11.5	8.0	.5	3.0	2.0	4.0	100.0

It is no surprise that those who "agree strongly" with the statement that they belong to Hilldale Lutheran Church are mainly Finnish (78%) or at least one of their parents is Finnish. All of those who "disagree strongly" with the statement have no affiliation and 60% of those who "disagree moderately" are not Finnish.



## 9. CONCLUSIONS

In this research project two methods were chosen to help the Hilddale Lutheran Church in Thunder Bay, Canada, to go through the transition process from an immigrant congregation to an ethnic congregation. The PAR method has been the overarching method of this project, however it was unknown to the researcher at the first stage of the study. The Witehead/Whitehead Method was chosen for the first stage and it fitted very well together with the PAR method as part of triangulation. The Whitehead/Whitehead Method provides an excellent outline and supplement for the PAR phases Grounding in Context, the first phase in Beginning Praxis and Experiencing Conscientization. The research project was done in two phases. The first survey was part of the strategy building and the second one was designed to evaluate how well the adopted strategy had worked.

The PAR method provided the structure for the Hilddale Project and enable create a movement necessary for the transition. It is hard to imagine a method that would have served better. The method gives the group and the researcher a lot of options and is very flexible. It can be applied into different kinds of projects and can be used by researchers from a great variety of expertise.

However, the PAR method is quite demanding. Applying the method takes several years and thus cannot be used in projects with strict time limits. Trust building is essential for a successful project. In this particular project, I was lucky to be one of the group even before the actual process started. The method is challenging for an academic since the project, the questions and knowledge generated belong to the group, not to the researcher, and thus the researcher does not alone have the control over the research.

In the PAR project objectivity in a traditional sense is not possible. To address the question of validity four methods were used. Firstly triangulation was done by using multiple methods like the Whitehead/Whitehead Method, several sources of information and



various theoretical schemes. The purpose was to gather information from as many sources as possible within the time limit. Secondly, construct validity was checked by critically questioning the information, the plans and the actions. This meant that all decisions were made according to congregational, synodical and ELCIC constitution and by-laws and all levels of church, municipal and provincial administration.

Thirdly, face validity was provided by returning all information to participants for analysis and interpretation. The group itself was active in developing the questionnaires; they added, reformulated and discarded the questions. Since they were part of the group themselves, they also had an insider's analysis and interpretation of the data. Information from tradition and sociological context was provided to them and then they made their decisions based on the information. The fourth method was catalytic validity. This was the part of the project when it started to happen or did not. Some ideas might have had all the elements mentioned before but if the group did not take action, the process would start all over again. Many times the group spent a lot of time on preparation and planning but then did not take action.

In this process of validation also lies the limit of the method. Timelines pushed the group to the limit of their resources. Throughout the whole project the group was fighting against time that so often seemed to run out. Time sets the limits also for the researcher since there was always more and possibly helpful information available and still the focus was on nowness. Decisions had to be made at a certain time with the best information available. When decisions were made in a group, it was not just the information that was crucial for the decision making but also the politics; who was for and who was against. PAR is a democratic process and relies on acquainted participants in decision making. However, not everybody had the time or interest to get acquainted with the task at hand and this made the planning unpredictable.

The hypothesis of the first study was that by applying the Whitehead/Whitehead Method of theological reflection and the methods and principles of PAR to the setting at Hilldale Lutheran Church, helpful planning strategies would result for the transition from a basically Finnish Lutheran congregation to a Canadian Lutheran congregation. This study was an important part of the Hilldale PAR

process, and with its obvious limits was able to help the group in the process. The information gathered through the study was found helpful in the planning and also in the actual building and mission work in what PAR terms, the praxis. As it is with the PAR project, people themselves own the knowledge and thus the role of the new information gathered by the researcher is only supportive and enables the group to make informed decisions. The result of the first study was the adopted strategy for the transition.

The purpose of the second study was to follow up the process and to see if the strategy that was adopted after the first study was working. The Hilldale Lutheran Church adopted a direction for the transition by which they wanted to intentionally retain their ethnic identity and use it as "a positive force to lead them to the future". This direction of transition is in line with Milton Gordon's Liberal Pluralism Model, which is practiced in the Province of Ontario. Its emphasis is on equality of condition and opportunity allowing ethnic groups to pursue emphasizing their own ethnic culture without any restrictions. This second study further confirms that the strategy, which was adopted in the first phase, has been helpful for the transition.

Firstly the focus of the adopted strategy was on those who affiliated with Hilldale Lutheran Church through their childhood. Their focus in their mission was the first concern that was raised at the beginning, their own siblings, second and third generation Finnish immigrants and their families. This strategy is in line with Reginald Bibby's argument that Canadians are very faithful to their childhood religious affiliation. The information gathered through this second study confirms that the new and old members are at least equally faithful to their childhood religious affiliation as Canadians on average.

Secondly, the congregation adopted a strategy that included not just a person's religious affiliation but also ethnic culture according to previous studies. One's childhood home is one of the best ways to predict a person's future religious affiliation. Religion forms a psychological link that is interwoven at home with ethnicity. Together these two, religion and ethnicity, form a rather strong emotional link to the church and is an opportunity for an immigrant congregation. Correctly, the Hilldale Lutheran Church saw this possibility and followed the plan whereby the ethnic culture is utilized by religion.





Thirdly, the congregation decided to emphasize on youth ministry. According to the second study the trend is that the mission attracted, particularly, young families and their children. Forty-eight percent of those who have joined the congregation after Hilldale Lutheran Church started the mission are under 20 years of age and 10% of them are under 12 years of age. This emphasis is furthermore important because childhood affiliation again creates the psychological link to the next generation.

Finally, the strategy emphasized the rites of passage because they have traditionally been the strength of the ministry of the Hilldale Lutheran Church. The rites of passage include both religious and ethnic components and thus create strong religious ties to Hilldale Lutheran Church. All of the new members have been attending a church ceremony at Hilldale Lutheran Church before joining the congregation. Even though this study is unable to indicate what the role of the rites of passage is as they choose their congregation, this study suggests that these rites are important.

This study is emphasizing a positive outlook. The Hilldale Lutheran Church is living in a time of growing possibilities. This means that there is a growing number of those who affiliate with the congregation. The people are very faithful to their affiliation being it to the baptism, Sunday School, confirmation, mother's or father's religious or ethnic background. Generally speaking this bond is so strong that 80% - 90% remain faithful to it. This is how it will continue to be in the near future. Now is the time to take advantage of this opportunity, "enter when the door is open". In the light of the results of this study the present and the near future is a good time and full of opportunities for the Hilldale Lutheran Church.





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## APPENDIX 1: Questionnaires

### The Questionnaire in English and in Finnish Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church Questionnaire, 1994

Please answer the following questions by checking off the appropriate box

	<b>Most Important</b>	<b>Somewhat Important (Finnish/English/Total)</b>	<b>Not Important</b>
<b>1. Why do you belong to this church or group?</b>			
Is it:			
a. Because of the Finnish Heritage?	23/17/40	12/14/26	1/0/1
b. Because this is a Lutheran church?	28/16/44	18/16/34	2/0/2
c. Because this is a Christian church?	29/17/46	21/12/33	2/2/4
d. Because your friends come here?	3/3/6	12/6/18	
12/17/29			
e. Other _____	0	0	0
<b>2. Why do you come to church?</b>			
a. For spiritual guidance?	47/20/67	11/10/21	1/2/3
b. For fellowship?	3/7/10	14/17/31	13/4/17
c. To find inner purpose?	31/13/44	13/13/26	3/2/5
d. Other _____	0	0	0
<b>3. What do you think the mission of the church is?</b>			
a. Preaching the gospel in a traditional way?	48/19/67	16/13/29	0/0/0
b. To reach out those not regularly attending services?	27/11/38	12/17/29	5/2/0
c. To be involved in social issues such as world hunger, poverty, rainforests?	11/6/17	13/14/27	9/8/17
d. To be involved in local community services, such as the Lutheran Community Care Center?	8/13/21	24/15/39	4/1/5
<b>4. For the following statements below, please check the box either as agree, disagree, don't know.</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
a. Female ordination is acceptable	48/23/71	8/3/11	9/7/16
b. Homosexuality is an acceptable lifestyle	2/11/13	38/15/53	17/7/24
c. Abortion should not be allowed	31/14/45	21/12/33	9/7/16
d. We have the right to end our own life	6/7/13	34/17/51	15/8/23
<b>5. What is the major concern of your life at this time?</b>	<b>Major Concern</b>	<b>Little Concern</b>	<b>Not a Concern</b>
a. How to raise your children?	15/10/25	7/8/15	2/13/15
b. Your family?	33/25/58	6/5/11	5/1/6
c. Your health?	29/19/48	13/12/25	6/0/6
d. Your financial situation?	11/18/29	13/9/22	3/3/6
e. Please comment	0/0/0	0/0/0	0/0/0



**6. How often have you attended church in the past year?** Please circle one

- |                          |         |
|--------------------------|---------|
| a. None                  | 1/4/5   |
| b. Once or twice a year  | 4/14/18 |
| c. About once a month    | 27/8/35 |
| d. About 4 times a month | 42/7/49 |

**7. Has your involvement in the congregation increased, decreased, or remained about the same in the last few years?** Please circle one

- |                      |          |
|----------------------|----------|
| a. Increased         | 17/6/23  |
| b. Decreased         | 19/9/28  |
| c. Remained the same | 38/18/56 |

**8. If your participation has increased, which one of the following is the most important reason for this?** Please circle one

- |                                         |         |
|-----------------------------------------|---------|
| a. More time available                  | 5/2/7   |
| b. Because of children                  | 4/1/5   |
| c. More positive attitude toward church | 2/3/5   |
| d. Stronger faith                       | 25/3/28 |

**9. If your participation has decreased, which one of the following is the most important reason for this?** Please circle one

- |                                              |         |
|----------------------------------------------|---------|
| a. Less time available                       | 5/11/16 |
| b. Children less involved                    | 3/0/3   |
| c. More negative attitude towards the church | 4/2/6   |
| d. Health problems                           | 10/0/10 |
| e. Decreased faith                           | 3/1/4   |

**10. Think a moment of your five closest friends (individuals or couples) with whom you have social and recreational life. Do not include close relatives. How many are members of your congregation?** Circle the number that corresponds below.

0	1	2	3	4	5 or more
15/2/17	1/5/6	10/3/13	6/4/10	8/1/9	37/5/42

**11. How would you like to see our church in twenty years?** Please check appropriate box

- |                                                               |          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| a. Most of the people would be attending the Finnish services | 21/5/26  |
| b. Most of the people would be attending the English services | 31/5/36  |
| c. There would be equal attendance at both services           | 17/23/40 |

**12. In ten to twenty years do you think the congregation will be?** Please circle one

- |                            |          |
|----------------------------|----------|
| a. Bigger?                 | 16/15/31 |
| b. Smaller?                | 31/5/36  |
| c. Same size as presently? | 27/8/35  |

**13. At what times would you like to have the services?** Please circle a time under each heading.

English		Finnish		Sunday School	
9.00	22/9/31	9.00	7/6/13	9.00	3/3/6
10.00	10/16/26	10.00	25/8/32	10.00	11/5/16
11.00	6/6/12	11.00	40/14/54	11.00	23/11/33





Please answer the following questions by checking the appropriate box.

	Agree	Disagree	Don't know
15. The current morale of our church members is high.	11/10/21	10/5/15	42/18/60
16. There is a sense of excitement among members about our church's future.	27/14/41	10/4/14	27/15/42
17. The church leadership (clergy and lay) has the full confidence and support of the membership.	46/14/60	11/3/14	14/16/30
18. Are you in favor of our congregation building a new church on Hilldale Road?	28/25/53	34/4/38	11/4/15
19. Would you like to be involved in this building project?	25/10/35	38/8/46	8/13/21
20. To help with the relocation of our church there are plans to hire a mission pastor in mid 1994. Do you:			
a. Agree	23/14/37		
b. Disagree	24/5/29		
c. Don't know	26/14/40		
21. To establish a mission pastor here for 3 years, for a support circle of 200 people, it would be about \$4-5 a week above your regular donation. How much would you be able to contribute			
a. Unable to contribute	29/11/40		
b. \$1 per week	8/7/15		
c. \$2-3 per week	18/8/26		
d. \$4-5 per week	10/7/17		
e. \$6 or more per week	0/1/1		

#### Background Information

22. Male	26/11/37	Female	47/22/69	
23. Age				
0-19, 0/12/12; 20-29, 3/6/9; 30-39, 4/8/12; 40-49, 13/5/18; 50-59, 6/0/6; 60-69, 22/0/22; 70+, 20/1/21				
24. Marital status				
Single	Married	Widowed	Divorced or separated	Other
4/16/20	49/13/62	13/1/14	4/2/6	0/1/1
25. How long have you been a member of this church?				
Not a member	0-9 years	10-19 years	20 or more	
3/11/14	18/10/28	11/12/23	43/0/43	

Language of correspondence: Finnish 77, English 33, Total 110.

**Thunder Bay'n Suomalaisen Evankelis-Luterilaisen Seurakunnan  
Seurakuntatutkimus, 1994**

Olkaa hyvä ja vastatkaa kaikkiin kysymyksiin merkitsemällä rasti (x) valitsemaanne ruutuun!

	Erittäin tärkeä	Tärkeä	Ei tärkeä
<b>1. Miksi kuulut tähän seurakuntaan tai sen ryhmään?</b>			
a. Suomalaisen perinteen vuoksi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Luterilaisen perinteen vuoksi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Kristillisen perinteen vuoksi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Ystävien ja tuttavien vuoksi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Muusta syystä, _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>2. Miksi käyt kirkossa?</b>			
a. Hoitaakseni hengellistä elämääni	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Saadakseni olla yhdessä toisten kanssa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Löytääkseni elämän tarkoituksen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Muusta syystä _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>3. Mikä on mielestäsi seurakunnan tehtävä?</b>			
a. Evankeliumin julistaminen perinteiseen tapaan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Saavuttaa niitä, jotka eivät käy säännöllisesti kirkossa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Olla aktiivinen yhteiskunnallisissa kysymyksissä maailman nälkä, köyhyys, yms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Diakonia omalla paikkakunnalla; esim. Lutheran Community Care Centre.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>4. Seuraana esitetään väitteitä, joihin pyydämme Teitä ottamaan kantaa.</b>			
a. Naispappeus on hyväksyttävä	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Homoseksuaalisuus on hyväksyttävä elämänmuoto	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Aborttia ei saisi hyväksyä	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Jokaisella on oikeus lopettaa oma elämänsä	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>5. Mikä on tällä hetkellä suurin huoli elämässäsi?</b>			
a. Kuinka kasvattaa lapseni	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Oman perheen asiat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Oma terveytesi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Taloudelliset asiat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Muut asiat _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>6. Kuinka usein olet käynyt kirkossa viimeisen vuoden aikana?</b>			
a. En kertaakaan		<input type="checkbox"/>	
b. Kerran tai kaksi kertaa vuodessa		<input type="checkbox"/>	
c. Noin kerran kuukaudessa		<input type="checkbox"/>	
d. Noin neljä kertaa kuukaudessa		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>7. Jos et käy kirkossa säännöllisesti, osaatko sanoa syyn siihen?</b>			
En käy kirkossa koska, _____			



**8. Onko osallistumisesi seurakunnan toimintaan lisääntynyt, vähentynyt vai pysynyt ennallaan muutaman viime vuoden aikana?**

- a. Lisääntynyt ☐  
 b. Vähentynyt ☐  
 c. Pysynyt ennallaan ☐

**9. Vastaa tähän kysymykseen ainoastaan mikäli osallistumisesi on lisääntynyt. Mikä seuraavista on tärkein syy siihen, että osallistumisesi seurakunnan toimintaan on lisääntynyt?**

- a. Enemmän aikaa käytettävissä ☐  
 b. Lapset osallistuvat seurakunnan toimintaan ☐  
 c. Asenteeni kirkkoa kohtaan on muuttunut myönteisemmäksi ☐  
 d. Uskonielämäni on vahvistunut ☐

**10. Vastaa tähän kysymykseen ainoastaan mikäli osallistumisesi on vähentynyt. Mikä seuraavista on tärkein syy siihen, että osallistumisesi seurakunnan toimintaan on lisääntynyt?**

- a. Vähemmän aikaa käytettävissä ☐  
 b. Lapset eivät ole enään mukana seurakunnan toiminnassa ☐  
 c. Asenteeni kirkkoa kohtaan on muuttunut kielteisemmäksi ☐  
 d. Terveystelliset ongelmat ☐  
 e. Uskonelämän heikentyminen ☐

**11. Ajattele hetki lähimpiä ystäviäsi (yksityisiä henkilöitä tai perheitä) joiden kanssa olet kanssakäymisessä ja vietät yhdessä vapaa-aikaa. Älä laske tähän läheisiä sukulaisiasi! Kuinka moni heistä on jäsen seurakunnassamme? Ympyröi oikea vaihtoehto!**

0      1      2      3      4      5 tai enemmän

**12. Millaisena ajattelet seurakuntamme 20 vuoden kuluttua? Merkitse rasti (x) asianomaiseen ruutuun.**

- a. Suurin osa seurakuntalaisista osallistuu suomalaiseen jumalanpalvelukseen ☐  
 b. Suurin osa seurakuntalaisista osallistuu englantilaiseen jumalanpalvelukseen ☐  
 c. Molempiin jumalanpalveluksiin osallistuu suunnilleen sama määrä ☐

**13. Minkälaiseksi ajattelet seurakuntamme 10 - 20 vuoden kuluttua?**

Seurakuntamme on:

- a. Suurempi ☐  
 b. Pienempi ☐  
 c. Saman kokoinen kuin nykyisinkin ☐

**14. Mihin aikaan toivoisit jumalanpalvelusten alkavan? Valitse jokaisesta sarakkeesta yksi!**

Englantil.		Suomal.		Pyhäkoulu	
9.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	9.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	9.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	10.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	10.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	11.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	11.00	<input type="checkbox"/>

Muu: \_\_\_\_\_



**15. Vastatkaa seuraaviin kysymyksiin merkitsemällä rasti (x) asianomaiseen ruutuun.**

- |                                                                                     | Kyllä                    | Ei                       | En tiedä                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Seurakuntalaisten moraali on korkea                                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Seurakuntalaiset ovat innostuneita kirkon tulevaisuuden suunnitelmista           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Seurakunnan johto (pappi ja luottamushenkilöt) nauttivat seurakunnan luottamusta | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Kannatatko seurakuntamme suunnitelmaa rakentaa uusi kirkko Hildale Roadille      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Haluatko olla mukana tässä rakennushankkeessa                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**16. Voidaksemme toteuttaa siirtymisen uudelle alueelle olemme suunnitelleet n.s. "lähetys" -papin palkkaamista vuoden 1994 puolivälissä.**

Oletko kanssamme:

- |                 |                          |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| a. Samaa mieltä | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Erimieltä    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. En tiedä     | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**17. Voidaksemme palkata "lähetys" -papin kolmeksi vuodeksi se merkitsisi, että 200 hengen lähetysrenkaan tulisi tukea säännöllisesti tätä lähetystehtävää 4-5 dollarilla viikossa normaalin tuen lisäksi. Paljollako sinä voisit tukea tätä työtä?**

- |                                    |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. En pysty tukemaan               | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. 1 dollari viikossa              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. 2-3 dollaria viikossa           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. 4-5 dollaria viikossa           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. 6 dollaria tai enemmän viikossa | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**18. Taustatietoja**

- a. Mies ☐      Nainen ☐
- b. Ikä  
0-19 ☐   20-29 ☐   30-39 ☐   40-49 ☐   50-59 ☐   60-69 ☐   70+ ☐
- c. Siviilisäätö  
naimaton ☐   naimisissa ☐   leski ☐   eronnut ☐   muu ☐
- d. Kauanko olet ollut tämän seurakunnan jäsen?  
en ole jäsen ☐   0-9 vuotta ☐   10-19 vuotta ☐   20 tai enemmän ☐



# Hilldale Lutheran Church

## Seurakuntatutkimus, 1998

Olkaa hyvä ja vastatkaa kaikkiin kysymyksiin merkitsemällä rasti (x) valitsemaanne ruutuun!

### Taustatietoja

- Sukupuoli** Mies ☐ Nainen ☐
- Ikä** 0-12 ☐ 13-19 ☐ 20-29 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 40-49 ☐ 50-59 ☐ 60-69 ☐ 70+ ☐
- Siviilisääty** naimaton ☐ naimisissa ☐ leski ☐ eronnut ☐ muu ☐
- Kauanko olet ollut tämän seurakunnan jäsen?**  
 en ole jäsen ☐ 0-3 vuotta ☐ 4-9 vuotta ☐ 10-19 vuotta ☐ 20 tai enemmän ☐
- Jos ette ole tämän seurakunnan jäsen, kuulutteko mahdollisesti johonkin toiseen seurakuntaan/kirkkokuntaan, mihin?** \_\_\_\_\_
- Kuinka kaukana asut Hilldale Lutheran kirkosta?**  
 0 – 3 km ☐ 4 – 6km ☐ 7 – 10km ☐ yli 10km ☐

- |                                                            | Täysin<br>samaa mieltä   | Lähes<br>samaa mieltä    | Lähes<br>eri mieltä      | Täysin<br>eri mieltä     | En osaa<br>sanoa         |
|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>7. Miksi kuulut tähän seurakuntaan tai sen ryhmään?</b> |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| a. Suomalaisen perinteen vuoksi                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Luterilaisen perinteen vuoksi                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Kristillisen perinteen vuoksi                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Koska perheeni käy tässä kirkossa                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Ystävieni ja tuttavieni vuoksi                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Muusta syystä, _____                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>8. Miksi käyt kirkossa?</b>                             |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| a. Hoitaakseni hengellistä elämääni                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Saadakseni olla yhdessä toisten kanssa                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Löytääkseni elämän tarkoituksen                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Tuodakseni lapseni pyhäkouluun                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Lapseni on rippikoulussa                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Muusta syystä, _____                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



**9. Minkälaisessa toiminnassa tahtoisit olla mukana tai ottaa vastuuta?**

a. Pienryhmässä	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mitä muuta haluaisit sanoa seurakunnan toiminnasta _____
Raamattupiirissä	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Uusien jäsenten ryhmässä	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Suru-, yksinäisten- tai muu erityisryhmä	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Jokin muu ryhmä _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	
b. Yhteyttä tarjoavassa toiminnassa (nyyttikestit, myyjäiset yms.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
c. Jumalanpalveluksissa (sunnuntai-, viikko- ja ilta-jumalanpalveluksissa.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
d. Avustajana jumalanpalveluksissa (esim. lukijana)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
e. Seurakuntasuunnittelussa, -hallinnossa (esim. neuvosto tai jokin komitea)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
f. Pyhäkoulussa ja työssä lasten parissa	<input type="checkbox"/>	
g. Nuorisotoiminnassa	<input type="checkbox"/>	
h. Muussa, missä? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**Täysin samaa mieltä**    **Lähes samaa mieltä**    **Lähes eri mieltä**    **Täysin eri mieltä**    **En osaa sanoa**

**10. Mikä on mielestäsi seurakunnan tehtävä?**

a. Evankeliumin julistaminen perinteiseen tapaan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Saavuttaa niitä, jotka eivät käy säännöllisesti kirkossa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Olla aktiivinen yhteiskunnallisissa kysymyksissä; nälänhätä, köyhyys, sademetsien suojeleminen, yms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Sosiaalityö omalla paikkakunnalla; esim. Lutheran Community Care Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**11. Seuraavana esitetään väitteitä, joihin pyydämme Teitä ottamaan kantaa.**

a. Naispappuus on hyväksyttävä	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Homoseksuaalisuus on hyväksyttävä elämänmuoto	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Abortti tulisi hyväksyä	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Jokaisella on oikeus lopettaa oma elämänsä	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. On hyväksyttävää asua yhdessä ennen avioliittoa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



	Täysin samaa mieltä	Lähes samaa mieltä	Lähes eri mieltä	Täysin eri mieltä	En osaa sanoa
<b>12. Seuraavassa esitetään uskoa koskevia väitteitä, joihin pyydämme Teitä ottamaan kantaa.</b>					
a. Uskolla on erittäin tärkeä merkitys Minulle jokapäiväisessä elämässäni	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Jumala on ymmärtäväinen ja anteeksiantava	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Jeesus on Jumalan Poika	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Minä uskon, että Jeesus kuoli syntieni tähden	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Minä uskon, että Raamattu on Jumalan sanaa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Minä uskon, että on erittäin tärkeää kehottaa niitä jotka eivät ole kristittyjä kääntymään kristityiksi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>13. Seuraavassa esitetään väitteitä, joihin pyydämme Teitä ottamaan kantaa.</b>					
a. Olen henkilökohtaisesti kokenut että Jumala on olemassa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Minä uskon, että voin olla henkilökohtaisessa yhteydessä henkimaailman kanssa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Pahat voimat ovat todellisia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Ihmiset voivat olla yhteydessä vainajien kanssa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Horoskoopit ja astrologinen tieto on totta	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>14. Mikä on tällä hetkellä suurin huoli elämässäsi?</b>					
a. Kuinka kasvattaa lapseni	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Oman perheen asiat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Oma terveyteni	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Taloudelliset asiat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Miten saada enemmän sisältöä elämään	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Muut asiat _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>15. Kuinka usein osallistut jumalanpalvelukseen? Valitse yksi</b>					
a. Viikoittain	<input type="checkbox"/>				
b. Noin kaksi kertaa kuukaudessa	<input type="checkbox"/>				
c. Noin kerran kuukaudessa	<input type="checkbox"/>				
d. Suurimpina juhlapyhinä (pääsiäinen, joulukuu jne.)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
e. Kerran vuodessa tai vähemmän	<input type="checkbox"/>				

16. Jos et käy kirkossa säännöllisesti, osaatko sanoa syyn siihen? En käy kirkossa koska, \_\_\_\_\_

17. Onko osallistumisesi seurakunnan toimintaan lisääntynyt, vähentynyt vai pysynyt ennallaan muutaman viime vuoden aikana?

- a. Lisääntynyt ☐
- b. Vähentynyt ☐
- c. Pysynyt ennallaan ☐

18. Vastaa tähän kysymykseen ainoastaan mikäli osallistumisesi on *lisääntynyt*. Merkitse tärkeysjärjestyksessä syyt

siihen miksi osallistumisesi seurakunnan toimintaan on lisääntynyt?

1 – tärkein, 6 – vähiten tärkeä

- a. Enemmän aikaa käytettävissä \_\_\_\_\_ Kommentteja: \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Lapset osallistuvat seurakunnan toimintaan \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Asenteeni kirkkoa kohtaan on muuttunut myönteisemmäksi \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Uskonelämäni on vahvistunut \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Olen saanut enemmän vastuuta seurakunnassa \_\_\_\_\_

19. Vastaa tähän kysymykseen ainoastaan mikäli osallistumisesi on *vähentynyt*. Merkitse tärkeysjärjestyksessä syyt

siihen miksi osallistumisesi seurakunnan toimintaan on vähentynyt?

1 – tärkein, 6 – vähiten tärkeä

- a. Vähemmän aikaa käytettävissä \_\_\_\_\_ Kommentteja: \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Lapset eivät ole enää mukana seurakunnan toiminnassa \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Asenteeni kirkkoa kohtaan on muuttunut kielteisemmäksi \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Terveydelliset ongelmat \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Uskonelämän heikentyminen \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Pettyminen pastoriin/pastoreihin \_\_\_\_\_
- g. Pettyminen seurakuntalaisiin \_\_\_\_\_
- h. Muu syy, mikä? \_\_\_\_\_

20. Ajattele hetki lähimpiä ystäviäsi (yksityisiä henkilöitä tai perheitä) joiden kanssa olet kanssakäymisessä ja

vietät yhdessä vapaa-aikaa. Älä laske tähän läheisiä sukulaisiasi! Kuinka moni heistä on jäsen seurakunnassamme?

Valitse oikea vaihtoehto!

0	1	2	3	4	5 tai enemmän
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21. Millaisena ajattelet seurakuntamme 20 vuoden kuluttua? Merkitse rasti (x) asianomaiseen ruutuun.

- a. Suurin osa seurakuntalaisista osallistuu *suomalaiseen* jumalanpalvelukseen ☐
- b. Suurin osa seurakuntalaisista osallistuu *englantilaiseen* jumalanpalvelukseen ☐
- c. *Molempiin* jumalanpalveluksiin osallistuu suunnilleen sama määrä ☐





**22. Minkälaiseksi ajattelet seurakuntamme 20 vuoden kuluttua?**

Seurakuntamme on:

- a. Suurempi ☐  
 b. Pienempi ☐  
 c. Samankokoinen kuin nykyisinkin ☐

**23. Kumpaan jumalanpalvelukseen yleensä osallistut?**

Suomalaiseen ☐ Englannin kieliseen ☐ Molempiin ☐

**24. Mihin aikaan toivoisit jumalanpalvelusten alkavan? Valitse jokaisesta sarakkeesta yksi!**

Englantil.	Suomal.	Pyhäkoulu
9.30 <input type="checkbox"/>	9.30 <input type="checkbox"/>	9.30 <input type="checkbox"/>
11.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	11.00 <input type="checkbox"/>	11.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
Muu aika _____ <input type="checkbox"/>	Muu aika _____ <input type="checkbox"/>	Muu aika _____ <input type="checkbox"/>

**Vastatkaa seuraaviin kysymyksiin merkitsemällä rasti (x) asianomaiseen ruutuun.**

	Täysin samaa mieltä	Lähes samaa mieltä	Lähes eri mieltä	Täysin eri mieltä	En osaa sanoa
25. Seurakuntalaisten moraali on korkea	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. Seurakuntalaiset ovat innostuneita kirkon tulevaisuuden suunnitelmista	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. Seurakunnan johto (pappi ja luottamushenkilöt) nauttivat seurakunnan luottamusta	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. Kannatatko seurakuntamme suunnitelmaa rakentaa/rakennuttaa kerrostaloja tontillemme	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. Olisitko kiinnostunut ostamaan asunnonrakennettavassa kerrostalosta	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**30. Jos olet kastettu, missä kirkossa sinut kastettiin?**

- Suomalainen/Hilldale Lutheran ☐  
 Muu luterilainen ☐  
 Anglikaaninen ☐  
 Roomalaiskatolinen ☐  
 United ☐  
 Presbyteeri ☐  
 Evankelikaalinen ☐  
 Muu ☐

**31. Jos olet käynyt pyhäkoulua, missä kirkossa kävit?**

- |                               |                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Suomalainen/Hilldale Lutheran | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Muu luterilainen              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Anglikaaninen                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Roomalaiskatolinen            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| United                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Presbyteeri                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Evangelikaalinen              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Muu                           | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**32. Jos sinut on konfirmoitu, missä kirkossa se tapahtui?**

- |                               |                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Suomalainen/Hilldale Lutheran | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Muu luterilainen              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Anglikaaninen                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Roomalaiskatolinen            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| United                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Presbyteeri                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Evangelikaalinen              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Muu                           | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**33. Mikä on lapsuutesi seurakuntayhteys?**

- |                               |                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Suomalainen/Hilldale Lutheran | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Muu luterilainen              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Anglikaaninen                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Roomalaiskatolinen            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| United                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Presbyteeri                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Evangelikaalinen              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Muu                           | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**34. Mihin kirkkokuntaan vanhempasi kuuluvat/kuuluivat?**

- |                                          |                          |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Luterilainen                             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Anglikaaninen                            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Roomalaiskatolinen                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| United                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Presbyteeri                              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Evangelikaalinen (esim. helluntaikirkko) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Muu                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**35. Mikä on yhteytesi suomalaiseen kulttuuriin?**

- |                                                  |                          |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Olen suomalainen                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Molemmat vanhempani ovat suomalaisia             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Toinen vanhemmistani on suomalainen              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Minulla on muita suomalaisia sukulaisia          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Olen avioliitossa/avoliitossa suomalaisen kanssa | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Minulla on suomalaisia ystäviä                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Minulla ei ole yhteyttä suomalaisuuteen          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Muu, mikä _____                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |



Vastatkaa seuraaviin kysymyksiin **vain mikäli olette uusi jäsen tai vierailija** (vähemmän kuin kolme vuotta) seurakunnassamme!

**36. Milloin kävitte ensimmäisen kerran jossakin tilaisuudessa tai jumalanpalveluksessa Hilledalen luterilaisessa kirkossa?**

1996 ☐ 1997 tammikuu – toukokuu ☐ kesäkuu – elokuu ☐ syyskuu – joulukuu ☐ 1998 ☐

**37. Kuinka kuult Hilledalen luterilaisesta seurakunnasta?**

Sukulainen tai ystävä kertoi minulle ☐  
 Mission pastori kävi ovellani ☐  
 Mission pastori soitti ☐  
 Näin uuden kirkkorakennuksen ☐  
 Luin ilmoituksen lehdestä ☐  
 Kotiin jaetusta mainoksesta ☐  
 Muu, mikä \_\_\_\_\_ ☐

**38. Oletko ollut läsnä missään kirkollisessa toimituksessa Hilledalen luterilaisella kirkolla tai vanhalla kirkollamme (Suomalainen Evankelis-luterilainen Seurakunta, Secord St.)**

Kaste ☐  
 Konfirmaatio ☐  
 Vihkiminen ☐  
 Hautajaiset ☐  
 Muu ☐

**39. Oletko ollut mukana missään muussa tilaisuudessa Hilledale luterilaisella kirkolla tai vanhalla kirkollamme (Secord St.)?**

Myyjäiset ☐  
 Konsertti ☐  
 Muu, mikä ☐



**40. Miksi päätit palata takaisin Hilledalen luterilaiseen seurakuntaan ensimmäisen käyntisi jälkeen?**

**Merkitse numeroin eri syiden tärkeysjärjestys.**

**1 – kaikkein tärkein, 13 – vähiten tärkeä.**

- |                                                        |       |                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------|--------------------|
| a. Kirkon hyvä sijainti                                | _____ | Lisätietoja: _____ |
| b. Sopiva jumalanpalveluksen aika                      | _____ | _____              |
| c. Koin seurakuntalaisten taholta olevani tervetullut  | _____ | _____              |
| d. Koin pastorin/pastorien taholta olevani tervetullut | _____ | _____              |
| e. Pidin jumalanpalveluksesta yleensä                  | _____ | _____              |
| f. Koin saarnan sanoman merkitykselliseksi             | _____ | _____              |
| g. Pidin saarnan esitystavasta                         | _____ | _____              |
| h. Pidin musiikista                                    | _____ | _____              |
| i. Minua kutsuttiin tulemaan uudestaan                 | _____ | _____              |
| j. Löysin mielekästä tekemistä seurakunnasta           | _____ | _____              |
| k. Lapseni/perheeni halusi tulla uudestaan             | _____ | _____              |
| l. Koin oloni mukavaksi ja rennoksi                    | _____ | _____              |
| m. Muu syy _____                                       | _____ | _____              |

**41. Miksi päätit palata takaisin Hilledalen luterilaiseen seurakuntaan ensimmäisen käyntisi jälkeen?**

**Merkitse numeroin eri syiden tärkeysjärjestys.**

**1 – kaikkein tärkein, 13 – vähiten tärkeä.**

- |                                                                     |       |                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|--------------------|
| a. En kokenut olevani tervetullut seurakuntalaisten taholta         | _____ | Lisätietoja: _____ |
| b. En kokenut olevani tervetullut pastorin/pastorien taholta        | _____ | _____              |
| c. Kirkon sijainti ei ole minulle sopiva                            | _____ | _____              |
| d. Jumalanpalveluksen aika ei ole minulle sopiva                    | _____ | _____              |
| e. En pitänyt jumalanpalveluksesta yleensä                          | _____ | _____              |
| f. En kokenut saarnan sanomaa merkityksellisenä                     | _____ | _____              |
| g. En pitänyt saarnan esitystavasta                                 | _____ | _____              |
| h. En pitänyt musiikista                                            | _____ | _____              |
| i. En tuntenut kirkossa ketään                                      | _____ | _____              |
| j. Koin että minulta vaadittiin liikaa sitoutumista                 | _____ | _____              |
| k. Minä/lapseni en/emme pitäneet pyhäkoulusta                       | _____ | _____              |
| l. Minä/lapseni en/emme pitäneet rippikoulusta tai nuorten ryhmästä | _____ | _____              |
| m. Muu syy _____                                                    | _____ | _____              |

## Kaikille

**Mitä muuta haluaisit sanoa seurakunnasta tai sen toiminnasta**

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**KIITOS!**



## HILDALE LUTHERAN CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL STUDY

Please answer the following questions by marking a cross (X) in an appropriate box unless other vice indicated.

1. Male ☐ Female ☐
2. **Age** 0-12 ☐ 13-19 ☐ 20-29 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 40-49 ☐ 50-59 ☐ 60-69 ☐ 70+ ☐
3. **Marital status** Single ☐ Married ☐ Widowed ☐ Divorced or separated ☐ Other ☐
4. **How long have you been a member of this church?**  
 Not a member ☐ 0-3 years ☐ 4-9 years ☐ 10-19 years ☐ 20 or more ☐
5. **If not, are you a member of another congregation / denomination, which?** \_\_\_\_\_

**6. How far do you live from Hilldale Lutheran Church?**

0-3 km ☐ 4-6 km ☐ 7-10 km ☐ over 10 km ☐

<b>Agree Strongly</b>	<b>Agree Moderately</b>	<b>Disagree Moderately</b>	<b>Disagree Strongly</b>	<b>Don't know Not Sure</b>
---------------------------	-----------------------------	--------------------------------	------------------------------	--------------------------------

**7. Why do you belong to this church or group?**

Is it:

- |                                       |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Because of the Finnish heritage    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Because this is a Lutheran church  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Because this is a Christian church | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Because my family comes here       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Because my friends come here       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Other _____                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**8. Why do you come to church?**

- |                                           |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. For spiritual guidance                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. For fellowship                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. To find inner purpose                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. To bring children to Sunday School     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. My children are in Confirmation School | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Other _____                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



**9. In what kind of activities would you like to participate or to be involved?**

a. Small group programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	Comments: _____
Bible study	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Inquirers class	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Grief, Singles, etc. special interest group	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Something else _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
b. Social activities (Potluck Suppers, Bake Sales, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
c. Worship opportunities (Sunday service, Mid-week-, Evening-Services, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
d. Assisting in worship services (Lector etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
e. Church planning, administration (Council, Committees)	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
f. Sunday School and ministry among children	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
g. Youth Ministry	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
h. Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

**10. What do you think the mission of the church is?**

	Agree Strongly	Agree Moderately	Disagree Moderately	Disagree Strongly	Don't know Not Sure
a. Preaching the gospel in a traditional way	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. To reach out those not regularly attending services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. To be involved in social issues such as world hunger, poverty, rainforests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. To be involved in local community services, such as the Lutheran Community Care Center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**11. For the following statements below, please check the appropriate box**

	Agree Strongly	Agree Moderately	Disagree Moderately	Disagree Strongly	Don't know Not Sure
a. Female ordination is acceptable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Homosexuality is an acceptable lifestyle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Abortion should be allowed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. We have the right to end our own life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. It is acceptable for unmarried to live together	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**12. Please indicate your opinion to the following statements**

	Agree Strongly	Agree Moderately	Disagree Moderately	Disagree Strongly	Don't know Not Sure
a. My religious faith is very important to me in my day-to-day life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. God is understanding and forgiving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Jesus is the divine Son of God	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. I believe that Jesus died for my sins	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. I believe that the Bible is God's Word	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. I believe that it is very important to encourage non-Christians to become Christians	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**13. Please indicate your opinion to the following statements**

	Agree Strongly	Agree Moderately	Disagree Moderately	Disagree Strongly	Don't know Not Sure
a. I have personally experienced that God exists	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. I believe that I can have personal contact with the spirit world	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Evil forces exist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. People can communicate with the dead	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Horoscopes and astrological information are true	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**14. What is the major concern in your life at this a time?**

- a. How to raise my children
- b. My family
- c. My health
- d. My financial situation
- e. How to get more out of life
- f. Other, what? \_\_\_\_\_

Major Concern	Little Concern	Not Concern
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**15. How often do you attend worship services? Please check one!**

- a. Weekly
- b. Twice a month
- c. Monthly
- d. Major festivals (Easter, Christmas etc.)
- e. Once a year or less

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

**16. If you do not attend services regularly, can you say the reason why?**

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**17. How has your involvement in the congregation changed in the last few years? Please check one!**

- a. Increased
- b. Decreased
- c. Remained the same

☐

☐

☐

**18. If your participation has *increased*, which one of the following is the most important reason for this? Mark the choices in order of importance. 1 – most important, 6 – least important.**

- a. More time available
- b. Because of children
- c. More positive attitude toward church
- d. Stronger faith
- e. I have been given more responsibility
- f. Other, what? \_\_\_\_\_

	Comments:
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**19. If your participation has *decreased*, which one of the following is the most important reason for this? Mark the choices in order of importance, 1 – most important – 8 – least important.**

- a. Less time available
- b. Children less involved
- c. More negative attitude towards the church
- d. Health problems
- e. Decreased faith
- f. Disappointed in the pastor(s)
- g. Disappointed in the members of the church
- h. Other, why? \_\_\_\_\_

	Comments:
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



**20. Think a moment of your five closest friends (individuals or couples) with whom you have social and recreational life. Do not include close relatives. How many are members of our congregation?**

Check the number that corresponds below.

<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5 or more</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**21. How do you see our church in twenty years?** Please check appropriate box

- a. Most of the people would be attending the *Finnish services* ☐  
b. Most of the people would be attending the *English services* ☐  
c. There would be equal attendance at *both services* ☐

**22. In twenty years do you think the congregation will be?** Please check one

- a. Bigger ☐  
b. Smaller ☐  
c. Same size as presently ☐

**23. Which service do you usually attend?**

Finnish ☐ English ☐ Both ☐

**24. At what times would you like to have the services?** Please check a time under each heading.

	<b>English</b>		<b>Finnish</b>		<b>Sunday School</b>
	9.30 <input type="checkbox"/>		9.30 <input type="checkbox"/>		9.30 <input type="checkbox"/>
	11.00 <input type="checkbox"/>		11.00 <input type="checkbox"/>		11.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	_____ <input type="checkbox"/>		_____ <input type="checkbox"/>		_____ <input type="checkbox"/>

	<b>Agree Strongly</b>	<b>Agree Moderately</b>	<b>Disagree Moderately</b>	<b>Disagree Strongly</b>	<b>Don't know Not Sure</b>
<b>25. The current morale of our church member is high.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>26. There is a sense of excitement among members about our church's future.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>27. The church leadership (clergy and lay) has the full confidence and support of the membership.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>28. I am in favor of our congregation building a condominium on our present site</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>29. I would be interested in buying a condominium</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**30. If you have been baptized, which church were you baptized in?**

Finnish/Hilldale Lutheran ☐  
Other Lutheran ☐  
Anglican ☐  
Roman Catholic ☐  
United ☐  
Presbyterian ☐  
Evangelical ☐  
Other \_\_\_\_\_ ☐

**31. If you have been in Sunday School, which church was it?**

Finnish/Hilldale Lutheran ☐  
Lutheran, other ☐





- Anglican ☐
- Roman Catholic ☐
- United ☐
- Presbyterian ☐
- Evangelical ☐
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ ☐

**32. If you have been confirmed, which church was it?**

- Finnish/Hilldale Lutheran ☐
- Lutheran, other ☐
- Anglican ☐
- Roman Catholic ☐
- United ☐
- Presbyterian ☐
- Evangelical ☐
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ ☐

**33. What is your childhood church affiliation?**

- Finnish/Hilldale Lutheran ☐
- Lutheran, other ☐
- Anglican ☐
- Roman Catholic ☐
- United ☐
- Presbyterian ☐
- Evangelical ☐
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ ☐

**34. What is/was the denomination of your parents?**

- |                | Mother                   | Father                   |
|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Lutheran       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Anglican       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| United         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Presbyterian   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Roman Catholic | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Evangelical    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other _____    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**35. What is your affiliation with the Finnish culture?**

- I am a Finn ☐
- Both parents are Finn ☐
- One of my parents is Finn ☐
- I have other Finnish relatives ☐
- I am married to a Finn ☐
- I have Finnish friends ☐
- I have no affiliation ☐
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ ☐



Please answer the following questions **only if you are new** (less than three years) to our church!

**36. When was the first time you attended a service at Hilldale Lutheran Church?**

1996 ☐ 1997 January – May ☐ June – August ☐ September - December ☐ 1998 ☐

**37. How did you hear about Hilldale Lutheran Church?**

Relative or friend told me ☐  
 Mission Pastor dropped by my door ☐  
 Mission Pastor called ☐  
 I saw the new building ☐  
 Add in a paper ☐  
 Flyers ☐  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_ ☐

**38. Have you attended any church ceremony at Hilldale Lutheran Church or at our previous location, the Finnish Lutheran Church (Secord St.)?**

Baptism ☐  
 Confirmation ☐  
 Wedding ☐  
 Funeral ☐  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_ ☐

**39. Have you attended any other occasion at the Hilldale or at the old church (Finnish Lutheran Church)?**

Bake sale ☐  
 Concert ☐  
 Something else \_\_\_\_\_ ☐

**40. Why did you decide to return after your initial visit to Hilldale Lutheran Church?** Mark the choices in order of importance, **1 - most important – 13 - least important.**

a. Convenient location \_\_\_\_\_  
 b. Convenient time of worship services \_\_\_\_\_  
 c. I felt welcomed by the people \_\_\_\_\_  
 d. I felt welcomed by the pastor(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 e. I enjoyed the overall worship service \_\_\_\_\_  
 f. I found the message of the sermon meaningful \_\_\_\_\_  
 g. I enjoyed the presentation of the sermon \_\_\_\_\_  
 h. I enjoyed the music \_\_\_\_\_  
 i. I was invited to return \_\_\_\_\_  
 j. I found meaningful things to do \_\_\_\_\_  
 k. My children/family wanted to return \_\_\_\_\_  
 l. I felt comfortable and relaxed \_\_\_\_\_  
 m. Other \_\_\_\_\_







## **APPENDIX 2: Project 3 - Enabling the Ministry of Others Developing a Mission Statement for a Canadian Finnish Lutheran Congregation**

### ***1. Background***

It is a trend in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) to develop congregational mission statements. This is part of a larger emphasis in our church called “Let's Grow.” This emphasis is a continuation of the previous one, “Forward in Mission.” Our Lutheran Church is facing the challenges of this new decade and wants to still be a major player in the future. Mainline churches in all of North America, as discussed in many books published recently, are trying to meet the new challenges in a rapidly changing world.<sup>64</sup>

It is crucial for a congregation to reevaluate its mission. As a Chinese proverb says, if you do not change your way you might end up where you are heading. From the opposite perspective one might say, if we do not know where we are heading we might end up where we did not intend. Different congregations have different emphases in their mission and even inside the congregation its mission has been seen differently. Every congregation *is* its history and so is every individual. Systems theory gives new insight to the meaning of the history and to the identity of a congregation. The history of a congregation includes the history of the denomination at large, the history of its members, as well as the history of the community it serves.<sup>65</sup>

Finnish Lutheran congregations have a specific mission of their own among the Canadian Lutheran congregations. Our special interest in ministry are the Finns: people who through their history relate to the

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<sup>64</sup>James Davison Hunter, Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America (New York, BasicBooks, 1991).

Tex Sample, U.S. Lifestyles and Mainline Churches: A Key to Reaching People in the 90's (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990).

<sup>65</sup>Edvin H. Friedman, Generation to Generation: Family Process in the Church and Synagogue (New York: The Guilford Press, 1985).



Finnish Lutheran Church, be it through their baptism back in Finland, their mother tongue or their reawakened interest in their Finnish roots.

One could ask if the mission of these Finnish heritage congregations is to pursue Finnish culture or to pursue assimilation to Canadian culture as soon as possible. Different congregations have unique approaches to this part of congregational life.

## ***2. Definition of terms***

- *Assimilation*: Is understood very broadly in this study to mean a transition process both cultural and social. In scientific study of ethnicity a difference is usually made between two models, assimilation - that is cultural, and pluralistic - that is social. In this study assimilation is seen through pluralistic glasses. Assimilation means that ethnic cultures change without disappearing, without disintegrating, “changing ethnic identities become vehicles through which groups and individuals participate in culturally mixed social structures.”<sup>66</sup>
- *Ethnic*: “Can be defined as a group of people who share a distinct culture, or as descendants of such people who identify themselves, and/or are identified by others, as belonging to the same group.”<sup>67</sup>
- *Mission Statement*: Is understood as a brief statement developed by a congregation that consists of two distinctly different and yet related parts: Identity and Purpose.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>66</sup>William M. Newman, “Theoretical Perspectives for the Analysis of Social Pluralism”, in The Canadian Ethnic Mosaic: A Quest for Identity, ed. Leo Driedger (Toronto: McClelland and Steward Limited, 1978), 45.

<sup>67</sup>Wswvolod W. Isajiw, “Olga in Wonderland: Ethnicity in a Technological Society,” in The Canadian Ethnic Mosaic: A Quest for Identity, ed by Leo Driedger (Toronto: McClelland and Steward Limited, 1978), 29.

<sup>68</sup>ELCIC, “Planning for Mission and Ministry,” in Let's Grow: Partners Together for God, ed. By Jim Chell, Guenther Dahle, Larry Deneff, based on material supplied by F.W.Lothar Schwabe (Winnipeg, ELCIC, 1993)



### *3. Value of the project to my ministry*

Developing a mission statement for the congregation is something that is expected by our national church body, ELCIC, as well as our particular ministry in Thunder Bay. We are in the process of hiring a mission pastor to start a mission among people who do not belong to our congregation. From the very beginning of this project it has been clear that we have to develop a focused mission statement.

At this time this project is actually part of my ministry and I am doing it together with my colleagues serving Finnish Lutheran congregations across Canada, and with the mission committee. In our congregation we have been talking in different groups about what our mission and vision are. This project, as well as my thesis, is the kind of back up study that is essential for me to be able to understand at least in part what is happening in this process which we are going through.

Since we started intentionally to plan for the future a few years ago, several other congregations have expressed their interest in being informed of what we learn in this process. In Sault St. Marie the congregation did a study last fall intending to develop a mission plan and develop a strategy for the future. We are planning to develop seminars to work together with congregations that are facing the same challenges.

Kennon L. Callahan writes in one of his books that contributes to the task of congregational long-range planning: "Indeed, the first and most central characteristic of an effective, successful church is its specific, concrete, missional objectives." For him "specific" means focused missional outreach on a particular human hurt and hope, like alcoholism, homebound elderly or epileptics. His concept is to start from the purpose which is an expression of the congregation's mission.<sup>69</sup>

Our national Church, ELCIC, has a different approach to developing a mission statement. Mission statements first state our identity or who we are, and secondly, our purpose or why we exist.

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<sup>69</sup>Kennon L. Callahan, Twelve Keys to an Effective Church (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983).



This combination fits better into our setting. To be able to develop our mission statement we have to be able to answer at least two questions: Who we are and what that means? Who do we want to be?

#### ***4. Assumptions***

It is assumed that Canada is a nation that has an official multicultural policy, the unique Canadian pluralism. This is understood in this study as a call to discover the unique mission of an ethnic congregation. While all Canadian Lutheran congregations share something common in their mission in today's society, they are also all unique according to their history and identity. On the other hand, Canada is a modern society that "stimulates change and tend to engulf ethnic enclaves into a mainstream nationalism."<sup>70</sup>

It is further assumed that we all as individuals and groups are in the process of "adapting to life in Canada: cultural adaptation, integration and assimilation."<sup>71</sup> We are all in this process, Canadian and foreign-born alike. We all experience the alterations in the social structure and social fabric of Canadian society. It is assumed that this process is continual.

#### ***5. Hypothesis to be tested out***

A mission statement of a Finnish Evangelical Lutheran church is unique among Canadian Lutheran congregations because of its unique identity, which leads to unique purpose. A mission statement for an immigrant congregation has to be faithful to its history and also to its future. What is a mission statement for a Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and how is it developed?

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<sup>70</sup>Leo Driedger, "Perspectives on Ethnic Pluralism," in The Canadian Ethnic Mosaic: A Quest for Identity, ed. Leo Driedger (Toronto:McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1978), 26.

<sup>71</sup>Edward N. Herberg, Ethnic Groups in Canada: Adaptations and Transitions (Scarborough: Nelson Canada, 1989).





## 6. Methodology

I am going to study the process in our congregation to develop a mission statement and compare it to mission statements developed in other Finnish Lutheran congregations who still operate mainly in the Finnish language. I am also going to compare these mission statements to the ones developed in other Lutheran (ELCIC and LC-C)<sup>72</sup> congregations in Thunder Bay.

## 7. Objectives

To develop a mission statement that is faithful to Finnish history and Canadian future!

- *First:* To try to develop a statement that defines who we are in terms of what we believe and whom we serve (the biblical, confessional and spiritual context) and also from where we have come (the historical context)?
- *Second:* To develop a statement that declares what we want to do because of who we are, we exist for a purpose. God calls us to a mission, empowers us for ministry, and sends us to serve in this world.<sup>73</sup>
- *Third:* I am planning to do this study simultaneously with our own development process in the hope that it will help us to identify who we are and why we exist.

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<sup>72</sup>ELCIC, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada  
LC-C, Lutheran Church – Canada.

<sup>73</sup>ELCIC, "Planning for Mission and Ministry", in Let's Grow: Partners Together for God, ed. By Jim Chell, Guenther Dahle, Larry Deneff, based on material supplied by F.W.Lothar Schwabe, (Winnipeg, ELCIC, 1993).

## **8. *Our Identity - Who Are We?***

Our church council appointed a mission committee to further develop our vision of the future of our congregation and to develop a mission statement. Our mission committee decided to do a congregational study to evaluate the needs and concerns of our congregation. The study was done in December 1993 and January 1994. The church council advised the Mission Committee to consult different church groups. The Mission Committee decided to consult the different groups by questionnaires that were distributed to every member either by hand or by mail.

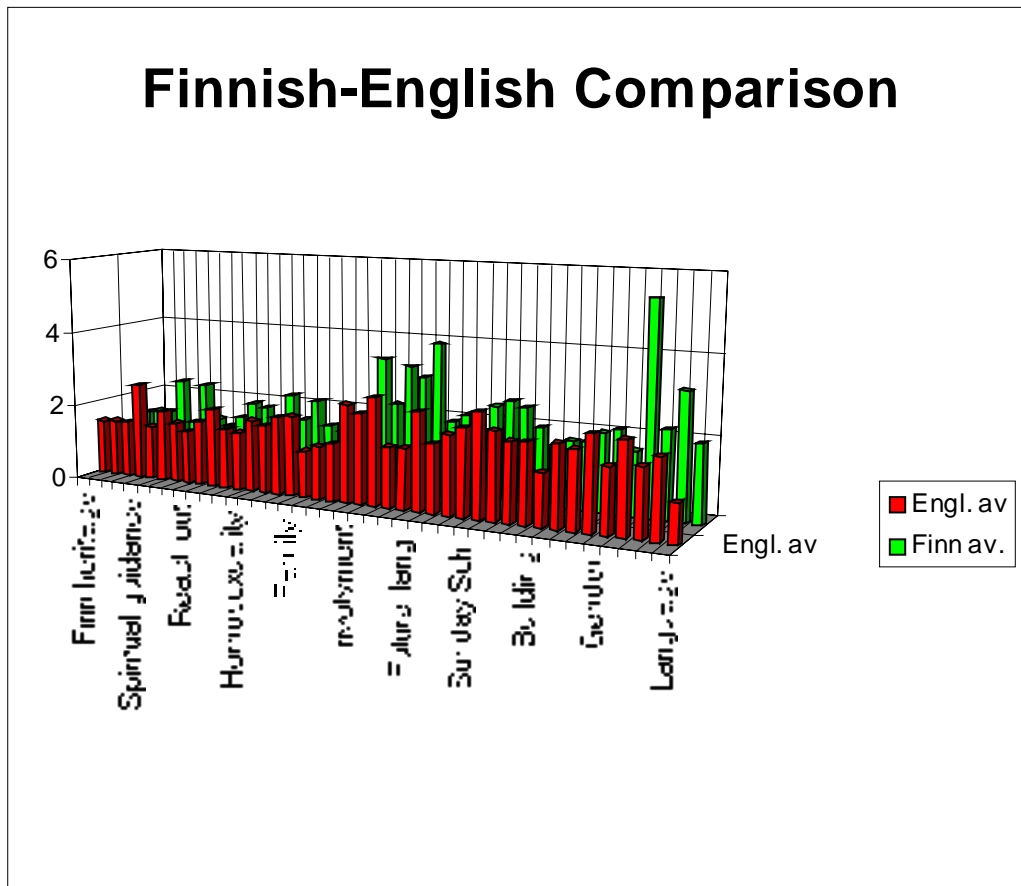
To be able to establish a statement of our identity we asked the following questions in the questionnaire: Why do you belong to this church or group? Why do you come to church? What do you think the mission of the church is? The questionnaires are found in Appendix A and B.

### **8.1. Why do you belong to this church or group?**

Naturally, Finnish heritage was more important to those who answered in Finnish than to those who answered in English. The significant differences between our two language groups were in their understanding of the importance of Lutheran heritage versus Christian heritage and the importance of friends. For Finnish speaking it is more important that the church where they belong is Christian than Lutheran whereas English speaking consider Lutheran more important than Christian. Statistically the differences are insignificant. This difference could be understood so that for older members Lutheran is kind of given when for younger generation Lutheranism is more of a choice that they have made.

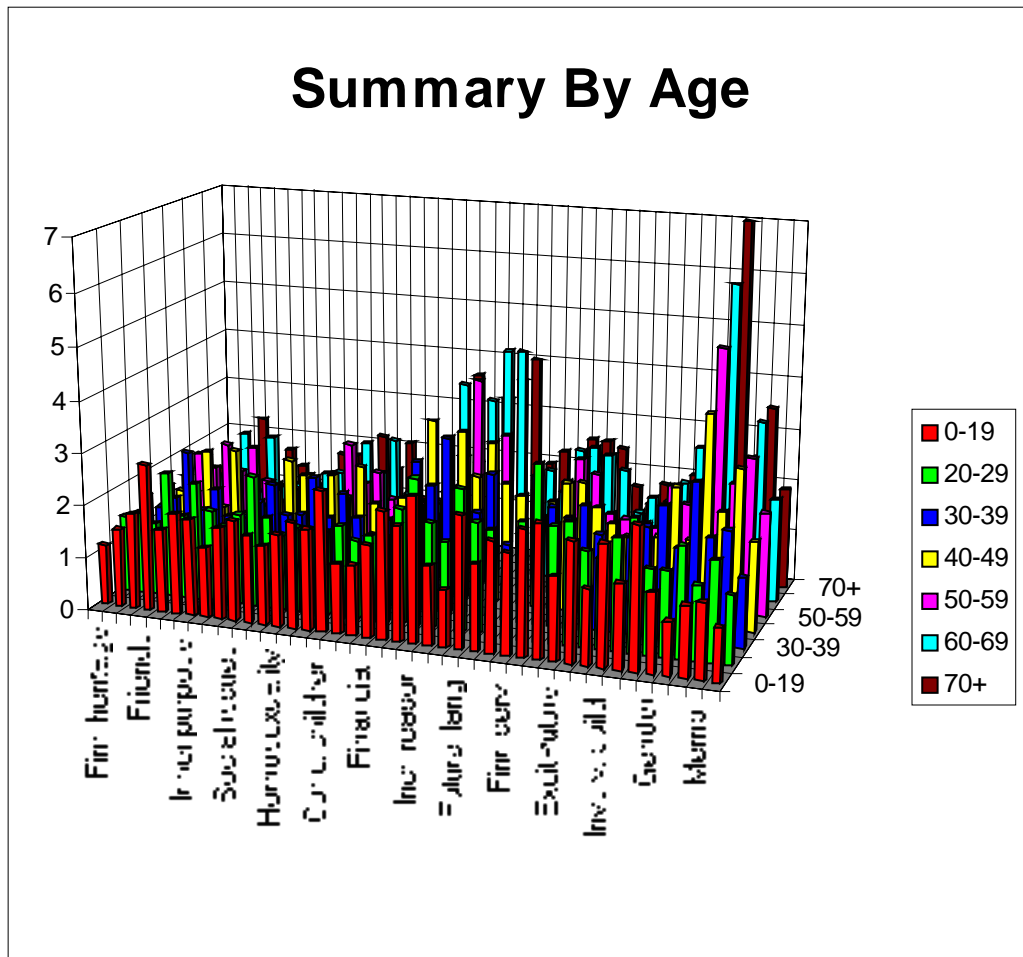


Figure A.2. - 1: Finnish-English Comparison  
(see also “Figure A.2. - 3.”)



A significant difference between these groups is that English speaking don't belong to this church because of friends, unlike the Finnish speaking. This observation is confirmed in question about friends. English speaking hardly have any friends coming to our church! It is interesting to notice that Finnish heritage is more important for age group 29 and under than for those in the age group of 30-59. Lutheran identity is most important to 60-69 age group and less important to those between 50-59 years.

Figure A.2. - 2.: Summary By Age  
(see also “Figures A.4.-A.6.” and “Figure A.1.”)



The Christian identity of our congregation is most important to 70 and over. Belonging to our congregation because of friends is more important the older one gets. Older members also have more friends in the congregation than the younger ones. This is parallel to the observation made about English/Finnish speaking members. Language and age factors are quite similar because most of the younger members are English speaking.

## **8.2. Why do you come to church?**

For those who answered in Finnish, spiritual guidance was the most important reason to come to the church, second was to find inner purpose, and fellowship scored lowest. For the English-speaking part of the congregation there is no significant difference between the factors. A significant difference is that compared to the Finnish-speaking, fellowship seems to be more important even though they don't have as many friends in the congregation as the Finnish speaking members.

Spiritual guidance was more important to older people than younger ones who come to the church more likely also for fellowship and inner purpose. It is significant though to recognize that for younger members spiritual guidance was also the most important reason to come to the church.

After studying our own research we (the mission committee) read the mission statements of the other Finnish Lutheran congregations in Canada. We were surprised to find out that none of them included the Finnish heritage in their identity. Basically they followed what has been written in the ELCIC constitution. We wanted ours to be more specific, a statement that is uniquely ours.<sup>74</sup>

After studying the mission statements made by other Finnish Lutheran congregations we studied the early history of our church. We studied a couple of the works that had been written during the short

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<sup>74</sup>Agricola Evangelical Lutheran Church, North York, ON, ELCIC Emmaus Evangelical Lutheran Church, Burnaby, B.C., ELCIC Matteus Evangelical Lutheran Church, Sudbury, ON, ELCIC.

history of our church. Heikki Mattila wrote the first history of our congregation, “Port Arthurin Itsenaisen Suomalaisen Evankelisluterilaisen Seurakunnan Historia 1950-1963.”<sup>75</sup> The second one is a brief article prepared by Irja Koiranen in 1990 for the booklet that was printed for the 45th anniversary of our congregation.<sup>76</sup>

After studying the data from the congregational study, the mission statements of other Finnish Lutheran congregations, and the history of our congregation we developed the following statement:

**We are originally a Finnish Lutheran Congregation with a strong history and sense of independence and still follow the “Folk Church” tradition of being open and willing to serve everybody.**

## ***9. The Purpose - We Exist For A Purpose***

After stating who we are we went on to state why we exist as a congregation. We draw our purpose from:

- Our congregation’s identity
- The experience and faith of our members
- The ministry opportunities of our congregation in terms of the personal and community needs and concerns, and the resulting opportunities for ministry
- The ministry areas which describe the “kind of business” in which our congregation is involved.

### **9.1. Our congregation’s identity**

One of the main reasons why our congregation was established was that the Finnish immigrants needed a church to provide important services for them. At the time when our congregation was established the Missouri Synod Finnish Lutheran congregations refused to provide

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<sup>75</sup> Heikki Mattila, “Port Arthurin Itsenaisen Suomalaisen Evankelisluterilaisen Seurakunnan Historia 1950 - 1963,” ( A Thesis for Pastoral Exam, Finland, Synod of Tampere, 1965).

<sup>76</sup> Irja Koiranen, “Historiikki”



funeral services for non-members and also did not allow pastors from Finland to preach in their church.<sup>77</sup> Our congregation was established to serve the whole Finnish settlement in Thunder Bay, most of whom used to be members of the Lutheran church back in Finland. It has been in our tradition that we are more like a parish or a community church and we like to be faithful to that tradition even though it is not always easy because a relatively small group of active members try to keep up a church that tries to serve the whole community.

## **9.2. The experience and faith of our members**

We think that it is our call as disciples to serve everybody and to provide a place for the community to worship and for the community groups to get together. Being faithful to our history and tradition, we want to pursue our folk church tradition which means that our church should be as open as possible to everybody and serve as many as possible. This fundamental understanding of church as a community that has invisible boundaries has been challenged many times and been a concern of the congregational leadership. The more common model of a Lutheran congregation in ELCIC is a group of people who have joined the congregation and are separated into two major groups, the active and non-active members. Because in Finland practically everybody belonged to the Lutheran Church, our members have found it uncomfortable to draw the line between active, non-active and even non-members.

## **9.3. The ministry opportunities**

Our Mission Committee used the 1991 Census Demographic information to determine the specific needs and concerns, and the resulting opportunities for ministry, of the community in our future mission field. We found out that our future site where we plan to relocate has a high Finnish mother tongue population. This observation is same in the immediate (0 -1 km) surrounding of the future location

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<sup>77</sup> Mattila, *Seurakunnan historia*, 17.

as well as in the whole mission area (postal codes P7A, P7B and P7G). It is also remarkable that the average age of the population in the immediate surrounding area is lower than in the whole mission field in general and suggest a specific focus for outreach style of ministry.<sup>78</sup>

After consultation with the officials of the Government of Ontario for Day Care we found out that more specific study needs to be done before getting a license for Day Care. This led us to the general decision to state that we want to be open to the needs of the community instead of stating what services we want to provide. We will find out what the needs will be once we proceed in our mission and do more specific studies in the mission area.

#### **9.4. The ministry areas which describe the “kind of business” in which our congregation is involved.**

Our specialties in ministry include; outdoor ministry, evangelism through cable television and memorial coffees. Through these ministries we serve the larger community in Thunder Bay. Our committee agreed that we should continue these ministries at the same time as we want to be sensitive to the emotional, spiritual and physical needs of the community. In general we understand that the mission of the church is to proclaim God’s love in word and deed through witness, service and fellowship.

Our purpose Statement is:

**We exist to make disciples of all peoples through witness, service and fellowship. We proclaim God’s love in word and deed, through actively caring for the emotional, spiritual and physical needs of the community.**

### ***10. Our Goals***

Ministry goals are descriptions of what is achieved when God’s people apply their faith and use their talents and resources to

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<sup>78</sup> Statistics Canada, 1991 Census, Desktop Demographics, prepared by ELCIC - Division For Canadian Mission (Ottawa, Statistics Canada, 1991)





accomplish the ministry to which God leads them. These goals describe the outcome of the faithful action of God's people who:

- Know their Christian identity and the purpose for which God has placed them where they are in point and time.
- Understand the key areas of ministry of their church.
- Are sensitive to the concerns and needs of their community

Our goals are:

- 1. To be faithful to our future and prepare the church for a growing English ministry.**
- 2. To be faithful to our ethnic background and serve the Finnish community as long as needed.**
- 3. To build a new church to provide a place for:**

The community to worship

Sunday School

Youth Group

Choir(s)

Ladies' guild

Bible studies

Confirmation

The community groups (i.e. Scouts, Guides, AA, etc.)

Day care center

Meal service

Art Groups etc.

**Motto: We want to be sensitive to the changing social and spiritual needs of the community. Let's Grow!**

## ***11. Conclusions***

Our mission committee met about twenty times within a half year period to accomplish the task that was given by the Church Council. First the committee decided to consult the different groups within the congregation by questionnaires that were distributed to all of the members. The mission committee felt that this way everyone's opinion will be heard unlike in congregational meetings or even in smaller group meetings where only few speak out and are willing or able to share their opinions.

Our mission committee worked hard in order to be faithful to the study, our history and to the future. One of the goals in stating the statements was to write them keeping the new neighborhood in mind. The committee plans to print a brochure to be distributed in the neighborhood so that people, who live close to our new church and hopefully will be contacted by our mission, have an understanding what kind of a congregation is approaching them.

Developing a mission statement has been a very demanding process for me. I feel that even though we did quite a comprehensive study and used lots of time and effort, more could have been done. If congregation is understood as a system that is in interaction with surrounding community it is very important to be aware of its own identity. It is also crucial that congregation does study its own environment, the community, which it is, part itself. Furthermore surrounding community is not only one system but consists of several systems. All the systems have their own history and their own needs and goals. To do a comprehensive study of the whole system is very demanding process. It is difficult to understand how each system relates to one and other.

One of the basic theological decisions that we made in our mission committee was the primary decision: Do we exist to drive our own mission determined by our identity or is our mission driven by the community and its needs? We came to the basic theological conclusion that we will find our own identity and mission through serving the



social and spiritual needs of the community. I understand that pastor,s role in developing a mission statement is very crucial. The process requires a lot of theological reflection to be able to integrate the information that is available into a mission statement that is unique to a specific congregation.

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Figure A.2. - 3.: Finnish-English Comparison

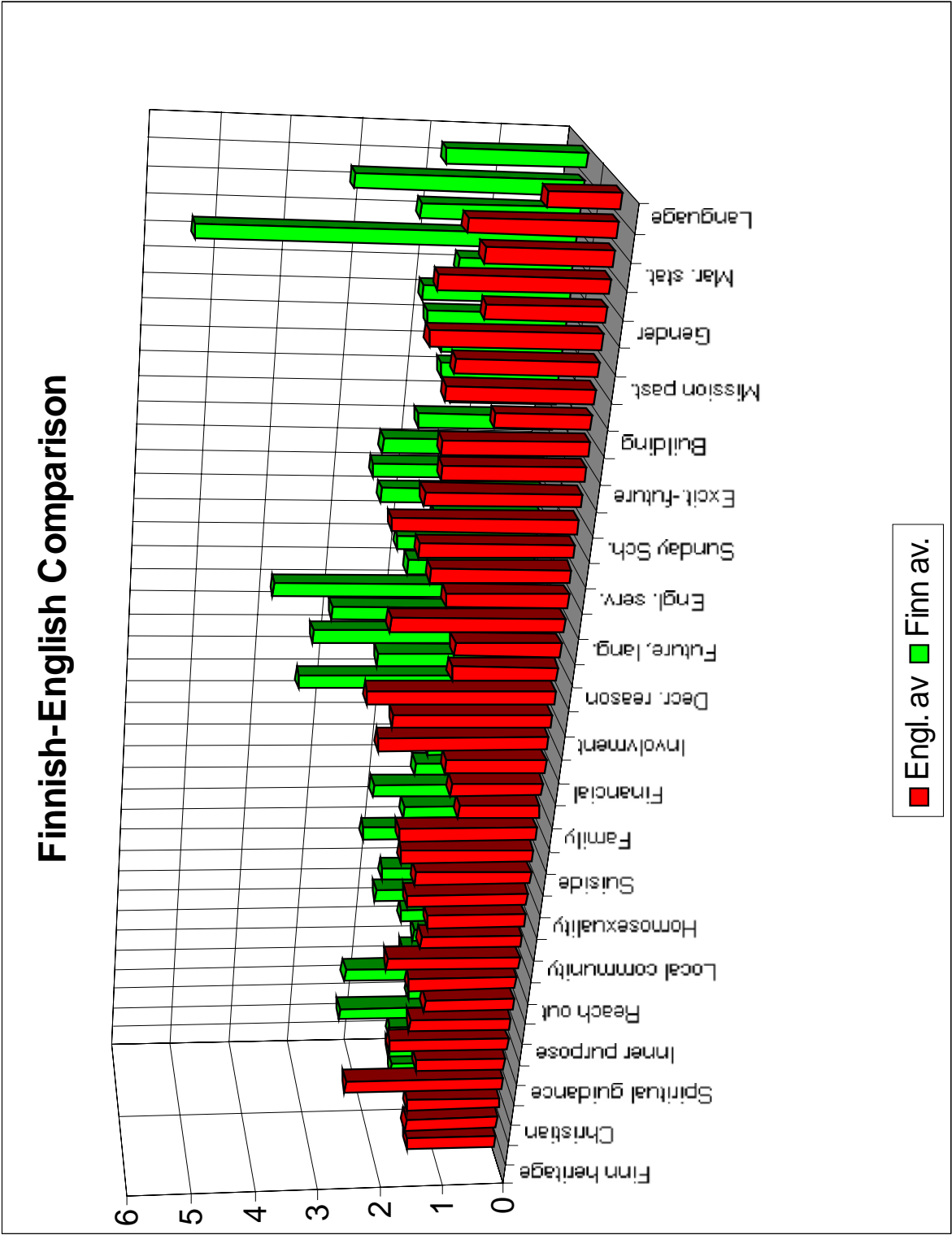


Figure A.2. - 4.: Summary By Age

Age	Finn heritage	Lutheran	Christian	Friends	Spiritual guidance	Fellowship	Inner purpose	Preach gospel	Reach out	Social issues	Local community	Female ord.	Homosexuality
0-19	1.2	1.5	1.8	2.8	1.6	1.9	1.8	1.3	1.8	1.9	1.7	1.5	1.8
20-29	1.4	1.6	1.4	2.4	1.6	2.3	1.8	1.5	1.75	2.5	1.8	1.4	1.6
30-39	1.6	1.4	1.6	2.5	1.5	1.9	1.4	1.5	1.7	2.1	1.5	1.6	2.3
40-49	1.6	1.5	1.5	2.3	1.3	2.4	1.2	1.4	1.7	2.3	2.1	1.4	2.1
50-59	1.5	2	1.8	2.3	1.8	2.3	1.6	1.2	1.5	1.8	1.5	1.3	2.5
60-69	1.4	1.3	1.4	2.3	1.1	2.2	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.6	1.6	1.4	2.3
70+	1.2	1.3	1.1	2.3	1.0	1.8	1.4	1.1	1.1	1.8	1.8	1.4	2.2
Age	Homosexuality	Abortion	Suicide	Conc. children	Family	Health	Financial	Attendance	Involvement	Incr. reason	Decr. reason	Friends	Future, lang.
0-19	1.8	2.0	1.9	2.7	1.3	1.3	1.8	2.4	2.2	2.8	1.5	1.1	2.5
20-29	#DIV/0!	1.6	1.4	1.6	2.6	1.3	1.7	1.3	1.4	1.6	2.0	1.3	1.6
30-39	#DIV/0!	1.6	1.5	1.5	2.4	1.4	2.3	1.5	1.3	1.9	2.4	2.2	1.3
40-49	#DIV/0!	1.5	1.5	1.7	2.1	1.4	2.3	1.3	1.3	1.5	1.9	1.8	1.3
50-59	#DIV/0!	1.3	1.2	1.3	3.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	1.5	1.0	1.3	2.0	2.2
60-69	#DIV/0!	1.8	1.4	1.3	2.0	1.1	2.0	1.3	1.2	1.5	2.0	1.6	1.2
70+	#DIV/0!	1.1	1.4	1.3	2.5	1.1	1.7	1.8	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.8	1.5
Age	Future size	Engl. serv.	Finn serv.	Sunday Sch.	Morale	Excit. - future	Leadersh. conf.	Building	Involv. build.	Mission past.	Support	Gender	Age
0-19	1.6	2.1	1.9	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.3	1.4	2.3	1.6	2.7	1.5	1.0
20-29	#DIV/0!	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.6	2.4	1.4	2.3	1.3	1.9	2.4	2.1	1.3
30-39	#DIV/0!	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.6	2.4	1.3	2.6	1.1	1.8	2.4	2.2	1.3
40-49	#DIV/0!	1.3	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.3	1.2	2.3	1.4	1.3	1.6	1.6	1.6
50-59	#DIV/0!	2.0	1.7	1.5	1.5	2.0	1.3	2.5	1.3	1.3	1.5	1.3	1.0
60-69	#DIV/0!	1.4	1.3	1.1	1.1	2.3	1.0	1.7	1.1	1.2	1.8	1.8	1.4
70+	#DIV/0!	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.4	1.2	2.1	1.2	1.5	1.9	1.8	1.4
Age	Mar. stat.	Memb.	Language										
0-19	1.3	1.4	1.0										
20-29	1.7	1.6	1.6										
30-39	1.2	1.6	1.6										
40-49	1.6	1.4	1.5										
50-59	2.0	1.3	1.1										
60-69	1.2	1.4	1.3										
70+	#DIV/0!	1.5	1.4										





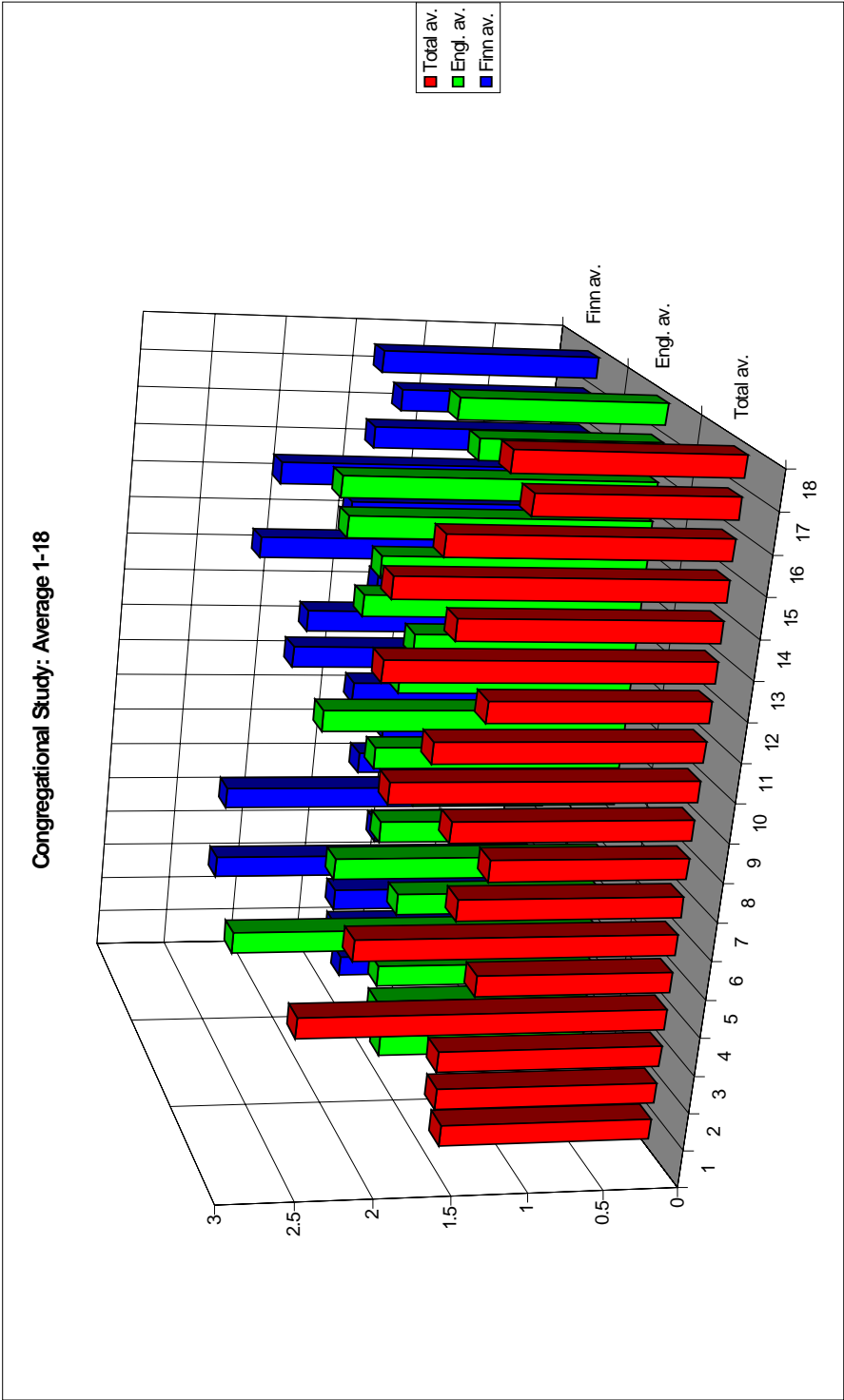


Figure A.2. - 5.: Summary By Language, Questions 1-18

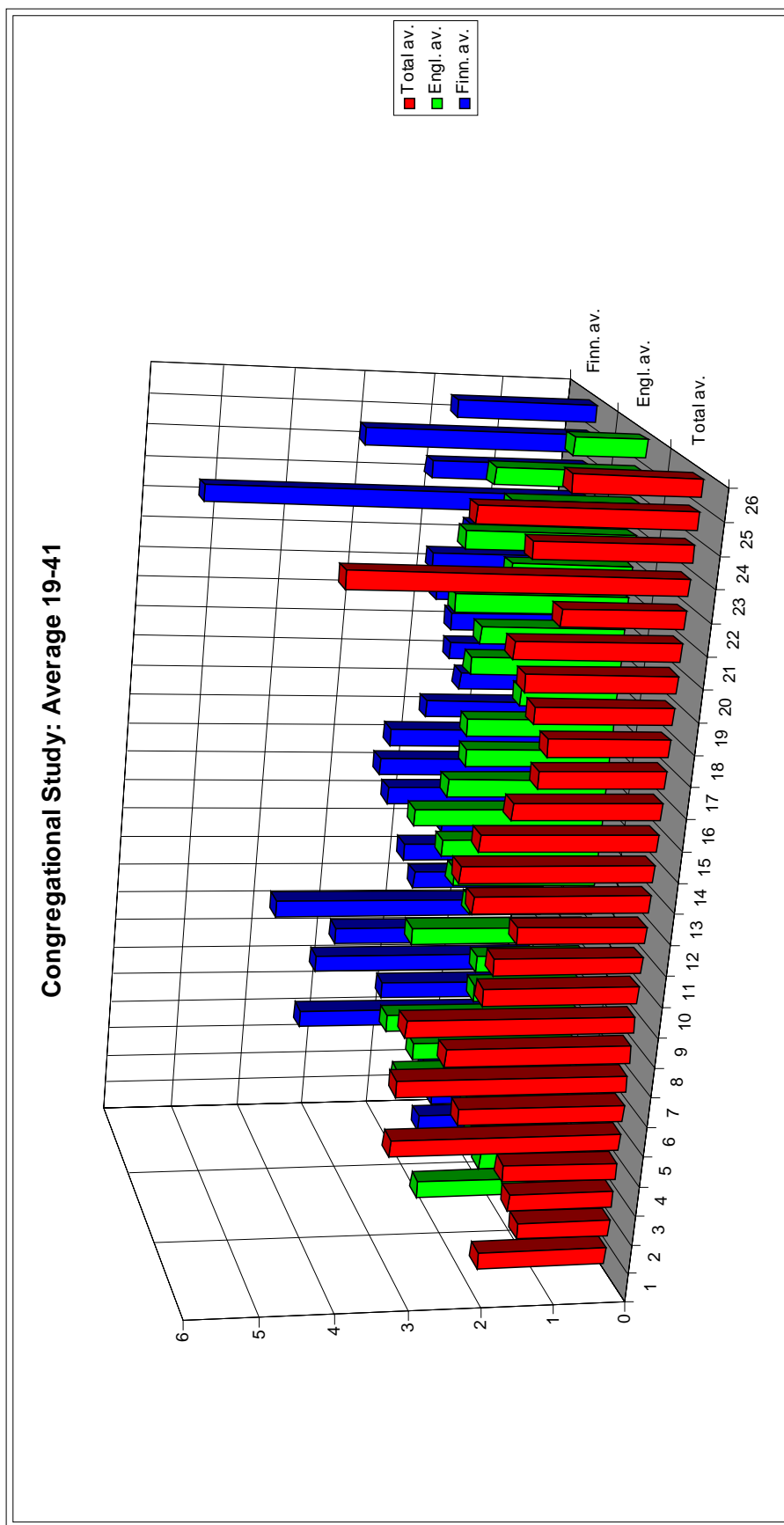


Figure A. 2.-6.: Summary By Language, Questions 19-41

